MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

#402 | NOVEMBER 2016 | $4.99

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CHARLES HAYWARD I HALLELUJAH!
MELTED ICE CREAM | DIRTY WOMBS
LAS VENAS | LITHICS | DRONEZ

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TOP TENS

Some of our contributors' top ten (or so) things we've reviewed this month. For review consideration, send two copies of vinyl, or one copy of CD-only or demo releases to our PO Box. We review independent punk, garage, and hardcore releases—no major labels!

GRACE AMBROSE

MYSTIC INANE – live
KALEIDOSCOPE – live
WILD AT HEART – CS
THE SHIFTERS – 45
RIK & THE PIGS – Life's a Bust EP
AHEADS – LP
VANITY – Don't Be Shy LP
VIOLENT CHANGE – 3 LP
BIB – live / NOTS – live
THE WAD –Ron is Wrong EP
PLASTIC IDOLS – EP + 45

MATT BADENHOP

DIÄT – live
LEUKAEMIA – EP
MAKACH – Enfant(e) EP
PLASTIC IDOLS – EP + 45
AHEADS – LP
SAVAGE BELIEFS – Big Big Sky LP
LP FUTURO – Hábitos Ruins LP
ARROTZAK – tape
PURE DISGUST – LP

MITCH CARDWELL

JAMES ARTHUR'S MANHUNT – LP
CRAIG BELL – AKA Darwin Layne LP
MIKE REP & THE QUOTAS – LP
MUSK – Musk 2 LP
THE SHIFTERS – 45
RIK & THE PIGS – Life's a Bust EP
THE WAD – Ron is Wrong EP
VIOLENT CHANGE – 3 LP

ROBERT COLLINS

Escaped...

LAYLA GIBBON

RIK AND THE PIGS – Life's a Bust EP
VIOLENT CHANGE – 3 LP
BONEHEAD – You EP
PLASTIC IDOLS – "I.U.D." 45
MIKE REP & THE QUOTAS – LP
FUTURO – Hábitos Ruins LP
PURE DISGUST – LP
CRAIG BELL – AKA Darwin Layne LP
SILVER ABUSE – LP
SUSAN – Never Enough LP

DAN GOETZ

SUNSHINE WARD – Order 12"
PLASTIC IDOLS – "I.U.D." 45
EARTH GIRLS – Wanderlust LP
RIK & THE PIGS – Life's a Bust EP
WARTHOG – Culture? EP
MELTAWAYS / WET NURSE – split EP
MOLAR / PALE KIDS – split EP
PURE DISGUST – LP
LEUKAEMIA – EP
JUVENTUD PODRIDA – EP

GREG HARVESTER

EARTH GIRLS – Wanderlust LP
THE WAD – Ron is Wrong EP
RIK & THE PIGS – Life's a Bust EP
PURE DISGUST – LP
SUNSHINE WARD – Order 12" + CS
VANITY – Don't Be Shy LP
WILD AT HEART – CS
MACHO BOYS – CS and live
S-21 – CS
THE STOPS – live

KENNY KAOS

THE JEANIES – "Amilee/Bad Side"
STEVE ADAMYK BAND – LP
GUITAR GANGSTERS – LP
THE SHIFTERS – 45
PLASTIC IDOLS – EP + 45
THE REJECTERS – She's So Fine EP
SEX CRIME – LP
BAD SPORTS – Living With Secrets LP
EARTH GIRLS – Wanderlust LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

SEX CRIME – LP
MOLAR / PALE KIDS – split EP
CELEBRITY HANDSHAKE – CD
PAUL JACOBS – EP
ENTRACTE TWIST – 45
VINNY HOOLIGANZ – Late Nights EP
LEATHER TOWEL – LP
RED MASS – Re-Mi-Si EP
PLASTIC IDOLS – EP + 45
MIKE REP & THE QUOTAS – LP
CRAIG BELL – AKA Darwin Layne LP

RAY LUJAN

BAD SPORTS – Living With Secrets LP
CHOOK RACE – LP
EARTH GIRLS – Wanderlust LP
FOLK DEVILS – Beautiful Monsters CD
THE MOVEMENT – Fools Like You LP
THE REJECTERS – She's So Fine EP
SEX CRIME – LP
SUSAN – Never Enough LP
THING – LP
TOY GUITAR – Move Like A Ghost CD
NATO COLE / FM KNIVES – live

MARISSA MAGIC

MOZART – CS and bonus EP
GULA GILA – live
THE MALL – live
CHEAP JAZZ – live
HGS / UGLY / MURDER MURDER – live
MAGNETIZER / THE BLUES – live
BIB / NO BABIES – live
RIK & THE PIGS – Life's A Bust EP
GUERILLA TOSS / TOYOTA – live
VIOLENT CHANGE – 3 LP
THE SHIFTERS – 45

ROTTEN RON READY

CROWN COURT – Capital Offence LP
PARASYTES / SECTA – split EP
WARTHOG – Culture EP
THE WAD – Ron is Wrong EP
ARMS RACE – NWOBHC LP
SUNSHINE WARD – Order 12"
VANITY – Don't Be Shy LP
RIK & THE PIGS – Life's a Bust EP
MILD SHAG – Rat Race EP

FRED SCHRUNK

VIOLENT CHANGE – 3 LP
FUTURO – Hábitos Ruins LP
PARASYTES / SECTA – split EP
RIK & THE PIGS – Life's a Bust EP
EARTH GIRLS – Wanderlust LP
PLASTIC IDOLS – EP + 45
MOLAR / PALE KIDS – split EP
AHEADS – LP
EMPTY HEADS – Ugly EP

LENA TAHMASSIAN

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FUTURO – Hábitos Ruins LP
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VANITY – Don't Be Shy LP
BONEHEAD – You EP
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CHAIN OF FLOWERS – live
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ELI WALD

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WILD AT HEART – CS
NOTS – live
LITHICS – live
CRAIG BELL – AKA Darwin Layne LP
MIKE REP & THE QUOTAS – LP
PLASTIC IDOLS – EP + 45
VANITY – Don't Be Shy LP
CHOOK RACE – LP

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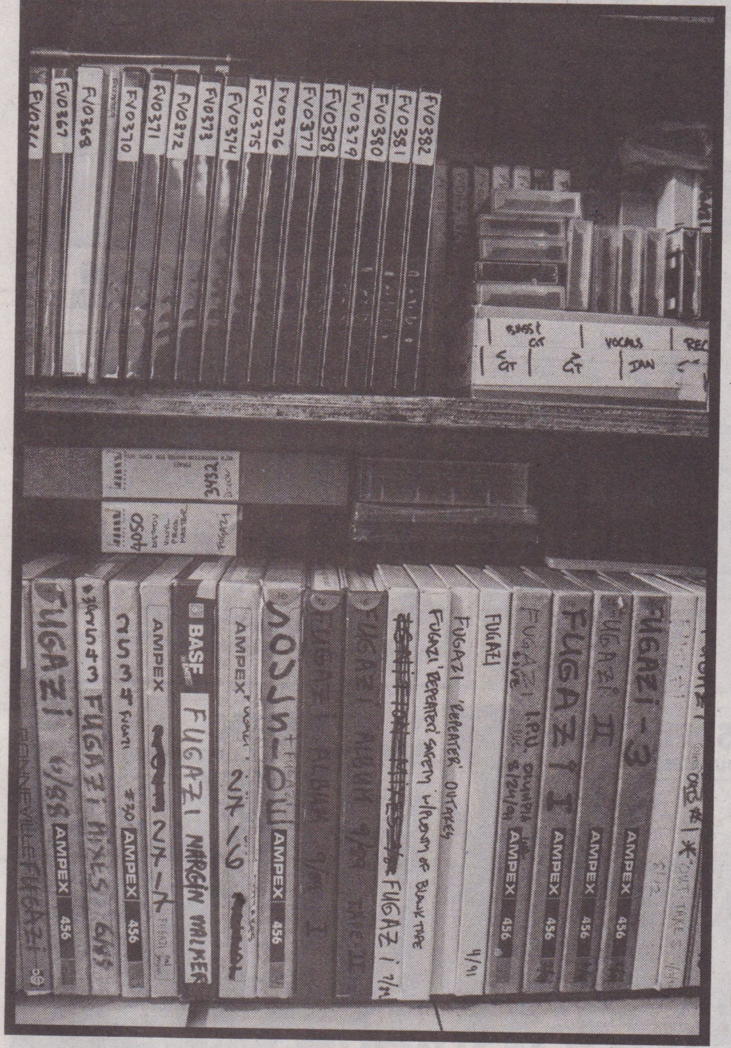

Reels at the Dischord House. Photo: Farrah Skeiky.

COVER PHOTO: Ian MacKaye and Nichole Procopenko at the Dischord House in Arlington, VA. Photo: Farrah Skeiky.

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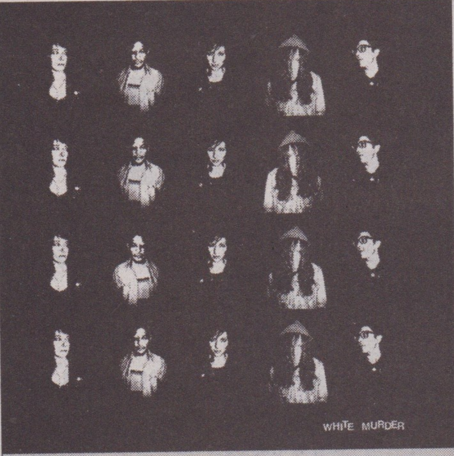

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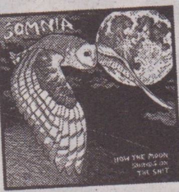

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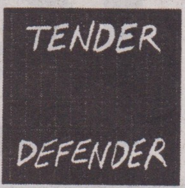

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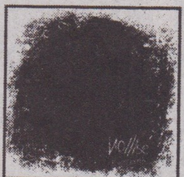

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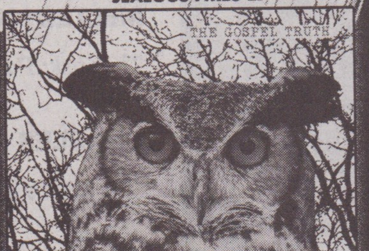

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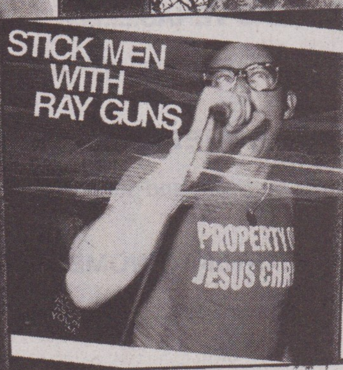

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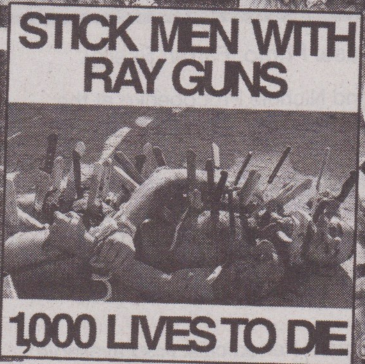
PROPERTY O
JESUS CHR



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LETTERS

Send letters to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. Letters may be edited for length. Response not guaranteed.

My wife was maced on the frontlines of the No Dakota Access Pipelines protest. The protesters marched up there in prayer and saw that they were illegally continuing construction and bulldozing through sacred burial grounds. The protesters linked arms and would not leave. Then the DAPL private contracted security brought out vicious untrained dogs and let them loose into the crowd and started macing everyone, including a pregnant woman. The security continued to allow their dogs to bite multiple people including woman and children who were there only to protect Mother Earth and their sacred land and burial grounds and water for future generations. This is not only a Native American issue—it is an issue that deals with all ethnicities and all communities along the Missouri River.

All people are welcome to camp. Even if you show up with only the clothes on your back you will not go hungry or go cold—you will be provided for because we are all equal and we all need water to survive. There are people from Cuba, Brazil, Germany, Canada, Peru, Austria, Australia, Alaska, Hawaii, South Korea, Hong Kong, Africa. There are people from all walks of life standing arm in arm in solidarity to protect our Mother Earth and the water she provides us for our generation and the generations to come. We stand in a peaceful way and are not asking anyone to take up arms but to come stand alongside us for your future generations.

#WaterIsLife #NoDAPL #WaterIsSacred

My wife and I thank you for helping spread the word that we need help. My wife was tagged in multiple videos—you can look at her facebook page if you would like more info: Jessica Nicole LaTray

---

Greetings, Maximum Rocknrollers! My name is Chuck and I am from Pittsburgh, PA. In August, I made my first ever visit to San Francisco. The reason for my trip out west was formed around visiting the *MRR* compound. I started (regularly) reading *MRR* in 1994 at the age of 20 and ever since then, I was curious as to what the place where all of those punk records were housed was like. Then, there was an opportunity where I could not only visit that place, but do a guest podcast as well! So, I booked a flight, found a place to sleep, and I was on my way.

I am by no means a writer, so I will try and make this short and sweet: my time in the Bay Area was pretty fun! I did some bike riding (including across the Golden Gate Bridge), went to all three Pirates games (we *swept* yinz!!!), did some record shopping at Amoeba (twice!), drank in a few rad bars (if you're reading this, thanks for a fun night out, Vicky from Portland!), did a bunch of other tourist-type stuff, and finally on my last night in town, I visited the *MRR* compound. There, Eli and Sam had the not-so-easy task of guiding me through recording my episode. I'm not going to lie, I was nervous (plus, hearing the sound of my own voice is kind of weird to me). After scrolling through the database, I compiled my list of songs. Then, I had to find those records in the most impressive collection I have ever seen! I made an offer of $465 cash for the lot, but was politely turned down. (Hell, there's green tape all over those fucking things!!!). Eli got me started and I was on my way to podcast stardom! I got to meet boss lady Grace for about one nanosecond (I think she had band practice to get to) and eat a delicious burrito (thanks, Eli!), as well. Sam patiently helped me through the second half of my show and somehow managed not to punch me in the face for asking so many questions and fumbling around so damn much. Anyway, I had a very nice time and I got to experience what I always imagined a visit to *MRR* would be like. I can't wait to walk through their doors again in five or ten years and have everybody say, "Who is this old bastard?" Good times indeed!

I submitted this writing for the purpose of it to be a guest column. If the head honchos allow it to be so, I will have had spoken (albeit briefly) with Tim Yo, had a record that I played on reviewed in *MRR*, had a band interview that I did (with locals Submachine) published in *MRR*, done a guest DJ spot for an episode of *MRR* Radio, and now a guest column in *MRR*. Not too shabby for this yinzer with the attention span of a fruit fly, if I say so myself.

—Chuck from Pittsburgh, PA

We didn't have room for a guest column this month, but we did have room for a letter! Check out Chuck's guest spot on MRR Radio—episode #1564!

Report from Leeds Zine Fair! If you want to send us a write-up of a DIY-minded event from your city, get in touch at mrr@maximumrocknroll.com.

Leeds Zine Fair is an annual event organized by the Footprinter Workers' Co-op. Based in Leeds, the co-op is a small printing business that produces zines and booklets while adhering to a set of ecological principles. Web design, badge making and zine distribution also play a part in the life of the co-op with a percentage of their profits going to worthy projects.

Left Bank Leeds was the setting for the event. This multidisciplinary arts venue has been in operation since 2009. The former Anglican church building had been left vacant since 1995 but was bought by the local charity Word of Life in 2002. Repair work to the building began in 2007 with funding from a Heritage Lottery grant. The building is located in the Headingley area of Leeds which is a multicultural suburb, mainly populated by students and young professionals.

As you enter the building, you emerge in to a bustling hall with rows of tables distributing zines covering a range of subjects. International zines such as *Maximum Rocknroll* stand aside locally produced punk literature. Copies of *Just Say Yo!*, *Own Noise*, *One Way Ticket To Cubesville*, and the crust heavy *Expedited Death* all made their way in to this writer's hands.

One innovative publication printed by the Footprint Worker's co-op is a guide to hardcore which blends traditional zine culture with modern technology. Classic US hardcore bands such as Bad Brains, Circle Jerks, and Misfits have features, embellished with a QR code which can be scanned to take you to more digital information. This handy introduction in to the world of hardcore is put together by the illustrator Nick Taylor.

Plenty of anarchist literature was available in the form of books, zines and stickers. Guides to running a workers' co-op sat alongside British prison system survival pamphlets. A booklet explaining fracking stood out as a particularly relevant publication due to the recent approval of a controversial plan to frack in the county. Feminist and LGBT stalls came up with imaginative competitions such as "draw a vagina, get a free zine." A game which begs participation.

Comic book culture was a major part of the event with publications such as *Ink Soup* taking up stalls. Imagination was in no short supply as I declined the offer of an "adult coloring book" but accepted the offer of a cartoon print depicting Samuel L Jackson à la *Pulp Fiction* fighting an army of the undead.

Other events included screen printing, badge making and the zine in a day printing. With a licensed bar, plenty of coffee, street food, and vegan cake, there was no reason to leave in a hurry. Every stall I stopped at, I was greeted with a smile and a conversation. Not something that you get everywhere you go. Leeds is a city with a proud history of punk, DIY culture and creative art and Leeds Zine Fair 2016 brought all of these elements together under one roof. Leaving the hall left me feeling more inspired to write and create and I'm sure it had a similar effect on others.

—John Marley

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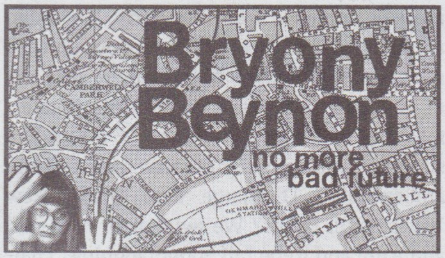
COLUMNS



We are leaving Zaragoza when I realize I've lost the necklace.

A thin, slightly tarnished gold rope that belonged to my maternal grandmother is gone from my neck. It was the single exception to my rule about practical heirlooms. I say *rule*, but it is really more like one of those coincidences that becomes a story that becomes a truth we tell ourselves about ourselves until it just becomes a thing. To make who we are match who we think we are. To construct ourselves; self-build.

When my father's mother died I was there to help clear out her home, a pebble-dashed end of terrace that I remember as being the epicenter of the small Welsh village where she lived. It was where my dad had grown up and where we had spent nearly every Sunday. The air in the house was still thick with the smell of camphor-scented mothballs and lavender when we entered. Mamgu was *big* into mothballs. The stink would somehow fill up your whole mouth, an effect I always felt had to be worse than whatever it was that moths might do to her fabrics. I remember the odd sensation of punching her scatter cushions down into black bin bags on that day. Mamgu's house had been a hive of busy love and coffee cake, always. Her tales of village intrigue and motormouth chat were interrupted only for the hallowed silence she observed during a Welsh-language soap opera named *Pobol y Cwm*. Within the meager means of her pension, she had amassed a panoply of sundry goods, stockpiled as though prepping for all possible futures. This, I know now, was a wartime mentality that had kept families fed and children alive. As she got older and more stubborn, when it was gently suggested that an object might be best donated away or recycled, she would remonstrate with the words "No! I'm saving it for *best!*"

The only exception to this joyful chaos rule was her pristine, unused "front room," demarcated for formal occasions only. This was a strange hinterland place we certainly never sat in, chintz patterns and a china tea set perfectly laid out in case the vicar came to tea. Her husband died of stomach cancer in 1951. My dad was four then and neither he nor his two older siblings were invited to the funeral. To my knowledge, she never had another relationship. She would leave the farm and move to this village, running the local shop from the ground floor for a few decades afterwards. That shop, once full to the ceiling of glass jars of boiled sweets, source of my father's puppy fat, would one day become this fancy, forever empty front room, saved "for best" or indeed for any visiting clergy. Mamgu would live into her nineties, surviving cancer, several bouts of gangrene and an amputation. She named her prosthetic arm Jeremiah and cultivated a campy ventriloquist's routine with him. She was supposed to wear Jeremiah often to get used to him and lessen the phantom limb pains. She could feel her now cut-off hand twitching to get things done. It was the only time I ever saw her cry and it was strictly from frustration. She often refused to wear the arm, prompting many of our weekly visits to begin with my Dad scolding her lightly as she welcomed us with a stump. *"Ble mae Jeremiah?"* ("Where's Jeremiah?")

As the last scraps of newspapers from the mid '60s were removed from drawers, furniture sent to charitable organizations, I salvaged the following inventory of strange items: a set of plastic light blue beads I had found upstairs that she had never to my knowledge worn, a blue leatherette wallet that she'd bought but seemingly never used, and an unopened set of cloths designed for cleaning records. She hadn't used a record player, at least not in my lifetime, there were no records in the house that I knew of, yet here they were, these multicolored dusters folded flat and made to look like an LP sleeve. Perhaps I wanted to keep all these odd, memory-free objects in case she needed them in future, or maybe her steadfast, sometimes ridiculous stubbornness had leaked into me through the grief by way of connection: of course, these things had been saved for best. I also left with a very un-grandmotherly item, a promotional baseball cap for the Welsh beef industry, which I am wearing as I write this. It had shaded her from the weak sun everyday while cultivating ingredients for unbeatably delicious preserves, so it was bleached pink by the sun. I left feeling ready to use these objects everyday. Other things I have inherited from her: work ethic, ridiculously wide hips, and the following maxim, which at the time seemed profoundly at odds with her history of lost love, but in hindsight seems totally informed by it: "When it comes to men, taste and try *well* before you buy." I was thirteen, and my cheeks burnt with rage over the sense of unjust exposure. I think I even threw myself onto the carpet. I realize now that this powerful one-armed fiend, award-winning courgette grower, whose prickly moustache seemed to make complete sense between rosy cheeks, was not actually mocking me. She saw me, could sense my desperate thirst for boys through my baggy, feigned disinterest. She just refused to indulge my fears. Thank you Mamgu. When I eventually blossomed—an expression I use loosely, but if you'd have me specify, picture those flimsy, slightly misshapen yellow flowers on the giant rhubarb I would wrench from your hillside garden—I certainly did take that advice. Self-build.

They found her face down in the strawberry patch. She wasn't wearing Jeremiah.

Mamgu did not, from memory, own much in the way of jewelry. That necklace, whose absence made my stomach turn, had been my mum's mum's, at least I remember it that way. Irene. Nanny. If I could make a thunderclap sound for you now I would. I don't have such a strong memory of the circumstances of her death because I was at university when it happened. Her life as it related to mine was a clandestine whirlwind of psych wards, secrets, half-truths and my parents' valiant attempts to manage her condition and maintain a relationship between her and a family who loved but were at turns terrified, pitying and angry at the chemical imbalance in her brain. It had bloomed like blood in water when I was too young to remember. Irene was an Irish flower of unbelievable beauty whose background had been shout through with unspeakable poverty with more brothers and sisters than I could possibly count or name, who'd watched her mutate into an English Rose in an era where such transformations were commonplace. My mother and aunt paint a jarring portrait of their youth, where, while they wanted for nothing as a part of the newly thriving suburban middle classes, were wounded by the lies and deceit of watching their mother barely bother to hide a decades-long affairs with a man from the golf club at which my grandfather was the chairman. He had worked his way up from South East London barrow boy to the top of an exports company. Like I said, these were the times. He died of a sudden heart attack on a golf course in Augusta, Georgia, where he had flown to watch the Masters tournament.

These are the stories we are told about our family that could be true or half fiction, illuminated by the need to weave ourselves a history, self-build, mold some context. I did not know her as a woman in her own right, the illness won out. I knew her as a see-saw, a vacillating threat level, a sometimes lovely, sometimes scary presence. My sisters and I knew that when she was "high" there would be treats, too-fast journeys in her Mazda, extra cokes at dinner, a tenner slipped in here or there. When she was "low," we battened down the hatches and hoped for it to pass. When she was sectioned, I knew her as a destination, as a cassette of songs I would listen to in the car park of the psychiatric unit while Mum visited her, and when I got older, as the tall, cold stairwell inside, draped with thick green anti-suicide ropes. When Nanny died, I grieved, of course, but felt the world around me exhaling long and loud. I remember that close family members convened in a specially rented house on the occasion of her funeral, and discussion of inheritance and jewelry was done in quiet snatches. There was clearly some UN-level negotiation happening, the delegates perhaps knew there was a limited window to orchestrate all this, made doubly hard by having to figure it out above and around grief, stymying gauche but real needs to salvage a piece of her, from before things had shattered.

In a moment of holier-than-thou asceticism and perhaps with a wish to return to the simpler grief of Mamgu's house, I asked only for her Kenwood brand food mixer with a heavy brushed metal bowl. We baked fairy cakes with it once in her bungalow near the sea. I parroted her diagnoses to my teachers as a young child, intending to impress them with my impeccable spelling of "manic depressive psychosis." Like her illness, the mixer was both heavy and dependable. I carried it between shared houses for the next eleven years even though I can barely bake a cake. Other things I have inherited from her: expensive taste and a deep, abiding fear every time I feel my mood swing violently from one thing to the other. In the end, it was my mother who gave me the necklace. Nanny had worn a sovereign looped onto it, heavy with the face of a man (a king or prince I think) on it, which always struck me as odd as it looked like a gold coin. That had gone, but I still remember it nestling in the tiny, slightly luminous folds around her neck, the fleshy wattle of a truly grand old bird.

The necklace left my neck on day two of a four day tour of Spain we dubbed "Chromialtis." I play drums in Efialtis and am certain I will never tour with another man after this. I jest, kind of. There is no feeling quite like watching how fast a tour van becomes a coven. The three women of Chroma, unknown to my bandmates before this tour, are their sisters too now, and routinely exclaim songs and catchphrases in a choral unison. Chroma is a gang. We are initiated. The credo is one of infectious love, sincerity, and being fucking serious about having fun. Eternal piss-take as the way to show love is the British way, but as Alex and Eva are Greek and Cypriot respectively, and I'm a wet blanket who hates banter, here there is a natural way of out this strangely counterintuitive way to show friend-love, the bulk of what I have known for a long time, this distanced language where the truth of it is murky and out of reach. It feels refreshing, like a cool calm hug. Spending this time away from the forces of our lives that require a constant blanket of distancing pretense is a godsend. Death to irony.

Watching the trees give way to shrub and rock and red earth, I sit and wonder if Mamgu or Nanny ever came to Spain and what they would have seen here. A generation or two too early for city breaks, but they were trailblazers in their own ways. Mamgu took tons of coach trips with the local Women's Institute group. I think she even went to Palestine. I remember that Nanny did have a record player, an incredible brushed silver number that complemented her shag pile carpet. I know Mum would be disappointed in me for having lost the chain. Am I tempting fate by not insisting we turn around the retrieve it? Will others die because of my actions? I'm struck by the notion that the unknown punk whose home we stayed in while she was out of town may find it and wear it. That's comforting. Passed on still within the family of woman. Pleased by the concept of leaving inherited goods for others to find, for a second I don't even know if I want it back, then realize I am trying to reverse engineer my forgetfulness into something less prosaic, more like fate, and scold myself. I always do that.

I think about these women of my life as my legs lose feeling, and press my palm into the space below my neck, clammy from the rental car's air con. I'm in the front seat, pushed so close to the dashboard because we are carrying six women and the bulk of a backline in an average sized family car. The rocky plains speed by and become mountains, suddenly Alpine, leading us north to the promised land: Euskadi.

Doing the "idiot check" of the unknown punk's flat before we left Zaragoza, Alex and I retrieve a pair of tiny leopard print knickers which, owing to how they've been strewn over a lampshade like a post-orgy decoration, must be someone from our party. We laugh about our deep fear of a "found your undies" moment. This is firstly because there are parts of my butt with their own microclimates, meaning that it requires more of a tent-like structure, and secondly because there *is* more embarrassing Discharge than *Grave New World*, right ladies? We twirl them in the air and Amy and Rebe fall about laughing. Their unified hilarity is a code means we have inadvertently hit on a funny story. It turns out Laura is notorious for leaving her smalls in people's homes because she likes to clean her knickers in the shower. My first thought is that this is the type of carefree yet practical habit that could only be cultivated by Laura, whose poise, grace and revolutionary intent is has the feel of a small, lithe deer rounding on you with an AK-47. The second is that shower laundry is actually a pretty strong idea for keeping shit fragrant on tour. Laura regales us with rollercoaster tales of having to driving a van alone across Brazil with no money on a Belgrado tour, watching GBH as a twelve-year-old, and ever so patiently assists me with my terrible gear-changing skills. I am in love with her.

We find endless initials scratched deep into trees at service stations. There's a covered bridge to walk across where we can see the dust roll along the motorway at such a speed that I half-expect the Mad Max convoy to zoom by under us. I steal ice from the buffet and rub it down the exposed limbs of our crew, who are all in black. I sneak a glance back as the assembled families stare at us walking away. The searing light projects graffiti tags across our legs as we march back down the perspex tunnel. We're a bit magic. We stop at an abandoned barn where some industrious souls have painted the word SUPERPUTAS on every available surface. We pose in every combination. A Flock of Seagulls song repeats itself on every drive. I suddenly place it from the psychiatric unit car park cassette. It sounds both intensely familiar and totally new. *"I ran, I ran so far away…"* Amy commandeers an iPod at the Basque squat and the girls drunkenly pirouette to it in the dust. *"I couldn't get away..."*

At the last gig of the tour, after the crammed car has successfully made it back from via Rioja to Catalunya without falling apart, we play our last gig in the garden of a social center located under a highway, true Barcelona style. We know it's the last Efialtis gig for an unspecified "long time." It's another all-gal bill which gets more and more intense as the sun sets. Pesadilla smash through a taut set, also their last, and also due to relocation. Itinerant punks seeking new life, song as old as time. My friend and other bandmate Louis, also recently relocated, the man who taught me to play guitar, is stage left, beaming. We are coerced into an encore where we repeat a song we just played. I drum in my bra. Everyone is screaming. It's ridiculous. Louis comes over as I pack away my cymbals, I expect our standard patter in the distanced language we are so fluent in, the one we pretty much invented. Instead he throws his arms around me and says "I was just stood next to that guy like 'See her playing? That's my best friend, look how amazing she is!'" My next steps are to get on a plane, repack, wait one day, and then get on another plane with a one way ticket to the other side of the world. Self-build.

INTERCOURSE *IS* VIVISECTION

E. CONNER

It is estimated that somewhere around 90% of humpback and orca whale interactions are humpback rescues of smaller sea mammals like seals, sunfish, and humpback calves from orca hunts / attacks. Certainly the camaraderie and organization of orcas hunting in pods as well as in alliance with human whalers is its own deep and interesting natural history but for now let's focus on humpbacks.

Scientists have called this tendency to rescue in humpbacks *maladaptive* as despite the their larger size they lack other defenses such as teeth and are also occasionally the target of orca hunting attacks. This kind of altruism is seemingly unique in the animal world.

I hesitate using this information in any kind of essentializing manner in regards to its correlation to any human experience. Nature and animal instinct are obviously and starkly different from the social conditions of humanity. However, I'm struck at the moment thinking of Bresha Meadows. If her name is unknown to you perhaps you've heard of her story. On July 28th, 2016, fourteen-year-old Bresha allegedly walked into the living room of her house and shot her father in the head while he slept. After killing her father she reportedly told her mother, the victim to his cruel methodical abuse, "Now mom, you're free."

Upon being interviewed by the press, Bresha's own mother had this to say about her daughter after the murder: "I'm sorry, Bresha. I love her. You're my hero. She helped us all. And she's my hero, our hero."

It's possible by the time that this column goes to print that Bresha could be charged as an adult for murder in her home state of Ohio. It's possible that for her efforts to save her family and herself she could be imprisoned, largely in isolation until she turns eighteen, and possibly spend the rest of her life in prison.

The history of women who kill men in is of personal interest to me. Noted feminist criminologist, Ann Jones posits in her book *Women Who Kill* that there is no way to extract the violence committed by women from the social position of those women. This social position of whatever it means to be a *woman* is compounded by the positions of race, class, gender expression, mental health, and more. Throughout the Victorian era white women who murdered their husbands, their rapists, and their fathers were often judged to be innocent by "unwritten law" appealing to the gendered and racialized essentialization of the weakness of their minds and bodies as well as often safeguarding their sexual purity.

Black women, other women of color, sex workers, gender variant women, and poor women were rarely granted the same kinds of predisposed innocence. *This is legal precedent even now.*

A little over a year ago I co-wrote a piece that was widely distributed online and in person at punk shows about possible reactions when assaulters, abusers, and their rampant (or latent) apologizers are outed as such. In addition, I've spent a large part of my late adolescence and early adulthood working out for myself publicly and privately what is often referred to as *surviving*. Indeed, even my closest friends have often called this position or the affect it causes *resilience*. It's supposed to be a compliment. It's supposed to honor the strength it takes push through the worst to get to the rest of your life.

Too often for myself what has been called resilience has felt like enduring hell. Never transcending the experience but allowing myself to over and over become defined by it. This position is illuminated by how many times it seems to happen or almost happen even though supposedly it has already happened. Always already becoming, or as Roky says, *I have always been here before.*

A few weeks ago several online outings of sexual assaulters, rapists, and abusers in my community went up online. I commented via my social media about my grief that this was seemingly never ending but with the hope that perhaps this time it could be different.

The truth is, I'm terrified at the possibilities of an institutionalized white supremacist feminism that uses the marker of economic equity as progress and utilizes the same social mores as those who ritualistically attack us. I loathe the systems of justice that are statistically more likely to punish Bresha Meadows than praise her. I think that language created to defend victims of sexual and gendered violence is slippery and used regularly to condemn trans women and women of color. The truth is, there will never be a punk scene free from the violence of institutional misogyny. There will never be a safe space. However, in the same vein that misogyny has been cultivated and spread as a large-scale institutional structure pushed along by capital and shit I believe deeply in the power of conspiracy.

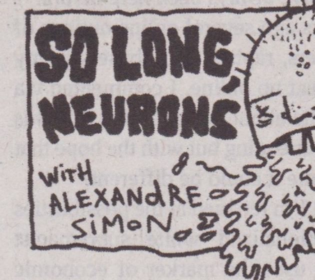
I do still hope. But I pray less for sane levelheaded community response to despicable and mundane violence and more for the tenacity it takes to establish trends of mutual aid and self-defense. I pray that others who have or do have to endure sleeplessness from imagining their abuser's head bashed in know that if that needs to happen I'm here. I pray that you'll never have to survive anything because that motherfucker is too scared of you to even try it. And I know that despite having to live with these defenses up you are still able to love and be lovable.

ENDNOTES:

1) For more info on Bresha Meadows please check out Victoria Law's well researched article (tinyurl.com/vlawbresha) or feel free to donate to her legal/support fund (gofundme.com/breshma).

2) Just so the only actual musical reference I leave you with isn't some flaky psychedelic rocker dude nonsense here are some relevant words from XYLITOL's song "Chaos Approach" from their demo: *"No small talk / No big talk / Sick of all this shit / No more hi are you / I want bottomless pit / Don't text each other anymore / Communicate with bricks."* Check it out for bopping pogo beats with searing VOID-style troll vocals.

3) The worst summer of my life is also Dragonette Summer 2016. This feels important because I know it's in part the reason I made it through. This column is dedicated to dragonettes everywhere.



When I was a kid, people smoked at McDonald's. Of course, they did it in the "smoking area," but there was no wall to separate them from the non-smoking families, eating their greasy cheeseburgers in the "healthy area." The first time I took the plane, people smoked cigarettes in there, too. And when I was a teen, I used to smoke weed on trains. I would just casually sit, roll, and light up. In a matter of seconds, the air would fill with that unmistakable green smell. Once in a while, people would complain—because only cigarettes were allowed. But I never got into trouble. And I don't watch much TV, but once I saw the first episode of that show *Mad Men*. It took place in 1960s New York. And the first thing you notice is that people smoke *everywhere*. Back then, if the show's to be trusted, even doctors smoked at work. Different times, right?

Nowadays, cigarettes are deemed evil. Years ago in France, they even pressured Lucky Luke to quit smoking. As you may know, the guy's not even a real cowboy, just the hero of a comic book. So even *fictional* smokers are given a hard time. Cigarettes get more expensive every year. The packages now have warnings like "SMOKING KILLS. DON'T START" in big bold black letters, complete with pictures of dead babies, men with throat cancer, or couples in bed, looking grumpy because the man can't get it up. Why? Because smoking not only kills, it *also* makes one impotent. And I'm only talking about France. Here at least, we can still smoke in the damn streets and in train stations, as long as we're on the platform. I've heard in New York you can't smoke anywhere anymore. Even in the '90s, in that TV show *Friends*, Monica and co treated Chandler like a straight-up *junkie* for being *addicted* to cigarettes. Nowadays, a doctor who'd smoke at work, or tell his patients smoking's alright. . . boy, that would make the news. People would sign online petitions against him. For the times, they are a-changin'.

Lately, I've been thinking about social networks. To be honest, I hate Facebook. I hate Instagram, too. And I hate all of you using those exclusively for your labels or zines or publishing houses updates, for making me feel forced to go check it out when I'm bored. I hate it for the same reason I hate, say, *Vice* magazine. Not because it's a "waste of time" (so is everything in life, technically speaking), or because it's "superficial" or "boring," but because of their insidious and omnipresent nature. To me, these things are pervasive. Injurious. Detrimental. Mind pollution. Because whatever you do, you can't ignore them. And what do you call a megacorporation that slowly but surely penetrates more and more aspects of human life, to the point where you're the one who looks suspicious for *not* taking part? Nowadays, when people ask me if I'm on Facebook or Instagram or God knows what, when I say no, you know what they tell me? "Oh, man, you're *lucky*."

And you know what else?

"Oh man, you're *clever*."

A bunch of people have told me things like this recently. It felt strange. Even if it's been a while I've realized no one I know seems to really *like* Facebook. It seems they all feel *forced* to use it.

And before I say *anything*, they get all defensive:

"Oh, *of course* I know it's crap, but I use it to *book tours*. Nowadays, you know, you *can't* book a tour without Facebook."

"Well, *of course* I know it *sucks*. But I use it to *keep in touch* with my *friends* from overseas. If I didn't have an Instagram account, I'd *never* hear *anything* from these people."

"Yeah, *of course* I know it's a *waste of time*. But I *have to* use it to find *work*. In my field, you know, people do *not* use emails no more."

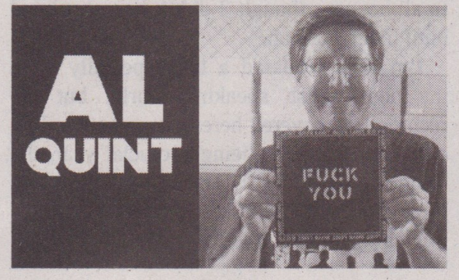
And here I stand, patiently listening for the 100th time. Remember I didn't even ask or say *anything*. This tedious talk is only happening because my reply to the question "do you use Facebook?" was a polite "No."

So what I'd like to say is please, people, have the decency to stop making excuses for yourselves. And please, realize that you're *not* special when you say you hate social networks but only use them for this or that. Like it or not, you're *all saying the exact same thing*, and I for one would appreciate never hearing it again. You know what I'd rather hear? "Fuck man, it *creeps me out*, but every time I wake up, I need some kind of *validation* for my existence." And I'd like you to pause, think and add, "So I log in, and every hour of every day, I need people to reassure me, to tell me I'm an *alright person*. I know it's *fucked up*, but I need at least 50 people a day to *like* that picture of myself. I need 100 people, at the minimum, to *like* that shirt I just purchased. I need them to *like* the new records I bought, and to *like* my cat, and to *like* the food I just cooked, and I just don't know *why*, man. It feels like a *disease*, slowly creeping into my brain cells. But I tell myself it's fine, because *everyone else* is doing it. Maybe it has to do with how *lonely* and *insignificant* we all feel, glued to this rock floating in space. And you know, it *does* make me feel *special, accepted, understood*. It makes me feel like I'm *part of the world*. But the problem is I need it *more and more* every day. . ."

Yeah, I'd rather hear this junkie talk. At least it would sound honest. Even something like, "Oh man, stop being such an ass. Facebook is *fun*, period" would be better than excuses. Because the point is I do not care *at all* that *you*, Mister or Miss Excuse, are using this or that social network. What I *kinda* care about is that *everyone* is.

Before you rant back, let me explain. A few years ago, I registered on Facebook. Guess I wanted to know what the deal was. A few days later, I closed the account. Because I was *already* checking it every hour. These things are as addictive as they're supposed to be. At some point I used Tumblr a lot, too. Still do for the label and zine. But every other month, I have to remind myself I use it as a website, not as a social network. So I unsubscribe from whatever blogs I had subscribed to. And God forbid, I also use Twitter. I don't let anyone follow me, though. I hate being *followed*, whether it be in the streets or online. Makes me paranoid. I check the account every morning for advice and support on writing fiction. I subscribed to four channels. That is more than enough. Need to keep it in check. In another life, when Myspace was king, I created an account and used it for a year or so. Making "friends," i.e. sharing my hopes and dreams with strangers. When I unsubscribed, I never heard about these people again.

If your band can't book a tour without Facebook, maybe it's because not enough people know about it. Maybe it just means you should get together more often, practice and record some more, work harder until these people say "Fuck, have you heard this band? I really want to book a gig for them, but they're not on Facebook. How do I find them?" Then, they'll shoot you an email or call you. They'll find a way. And if you *really* need Facebook to stay in touch with some "friends," sorry but you don't have any friends. Just some random fuckers you met once or twice. Friends are the people you *don't* need to be constantly in touch with to reassure you they still care. Friends are the people you don't see or talk to for a few years, but then it still feels normal and easy once you catch up. Friends will be friends even if they *hate* your new shirt, *hate* your new records, *hate* your cat or the food you just cooked. Friends are people you smoke cigarettes with, on the benches of reality, talking and arguing about things you wouldn't talk or argue about in the middle of a crowd of frozen bystanders, listening and *liking* your every word in the hope you'll *like them back*. And while I'm aware this rant might make me sound like some kind of ridiculous dinosaur, I'd like to share my hope that, one day, a massive shift in consciousness will happen, and Facebook and co will start being seen as damaging addictions. Something that's harmful to our mental health, our self-esteem, the way we act in reality, and the way we constantly make fools of ourselves, by looking like attention-starved clowns. And while I don't see it happening too soon, I can't help thinking that, in a generation or two, the backlash *will* happen, and it will be as massive a shift as the tobacco one. And maybe then, when Facebook and Instagram feature signs saying "SOCIAL NETWORKS KILL. DON'T START" in big bold black letters, a few diehards will keep sharing their selfies and emotional states with billions of ghost accounts, wondering how something that everyone did suddenly became something one should be ashamed of. Hell, maybe then, I can finally join.



1981—The Year Punk *Really* Broke

September marked the 25th anniversary of the release of NIRVANA's *Nevermind* album—you know, the album that brought punk back! It was as if the 1980s and the vibrant punk and hardcore underground had never happened. Nope, we went straight from the RAMONES, SEX PISTOLS and CLASH to Kurt and the boys' breakthrough. There was film called *1991: The Year Punk Broke*, ostensibly a tour documentary about SONIC YOUTH that also included NIRVANA, BABES IN TOYLAND, and DINOSAUR JR (ex-DEEP WOUND!). The documentary was shot by Dave Markey, a talented filmmaker who has legitimate punk bonafides, having logged time in SIN 34 and a few other bands. I don't think I need to recap much more, except that tons of bands got signed in a major label feeding frenzy and the same happened three or so years later with GREEN DAY's breakthrough. Truth be told, *Nervermind* has some solid tracks but I don't think I need to ever hear "Teen Spirit" again.

But was that the year punk broke? Of course not. I took a quick look at my 1991 "best of" list that year and some of my favorite were SUPERCHUNK, JAWBOX, FUGAZI, TAR, JESUS LIZARD, BORN AGAINST, and COSMIC PSYCHOS. Good bands, some of 'em great, but not exactly a banner year in the total scope of things.

1976 and 1977 are usually viewed as ground zero for punk's explosion and there was, indeed, a plethora of timeless, classic albums and 7"s and it wasn't all one monochromatic ball of noise, either. There was a lot going on around the globe and it's hard to fuck with debuts like the RAMONES' and CLASH's self-titled albums, *Never Mind The Bollocks, Damned Damned Damned,* the early STRANGLERS and SAINTS albums, the early Dangerhouse records and so on. Definitely an era of change.

But I think an argument can be made that 1981 was *the* pivotal year for punk's development, a branching out into new and exciting directions, without giving up its energetic focus. 35 years ago. . . hard to believe! There was plenty of diversity and creativity and many great bands made their vinyl debuts or put out attention-grabbing follow-up efforts. The first generation of bands had largely moved on, drastically altered their sound or put out less-interesting albums. But there was a veritable bounty of greatness that year. It certainly had a profound effect on this writer's musical tastes. I got exposed to a lot of it through local college radio shows, especially *Media Blitz* on WMBR (the MIT station), which played all West Coast punk.

So let's start with the West Coast. So many incredible records that year, beginning with TSOL's debut 12" and *Dance With Me* album. There was an evolution even in the short space of time between the two, moving from politicized punk into something a bit more shimmery and gothic, but still providing a solid punch in the gut. AGENT ORANGE's "Bloodstains" single actually came out in 1980 but their first full-length, *Living In Darkness,* was a perfect merger of surging melodic punk and surf music, packed with memorable songs. The ADOLESCENTS also helped invent the classic, melodic west coast punk sound on their debut full-length, following their "Amoeba" single. "Kids of the Black Hole" is an anthem for the ages. BAD RELIGION never sounded better than on *How Could Hell Be Any Worse,* long before the rough edges were smoothed off and the lyrics started reading like a PhD dissertation. DESCENDENTS came full bore out of the starting gates with their *Fat* EP, featuring the 12 second classic "Weinerschnitzel" as well as feisty punk gems like "Hey Hey" and "Global Probing," which hinted at the more tuneful elements that would follow on *Milo Goes To College*.

The Slash Records subsidiary Ruby yielded a pair of groundbreaking albums that year. GUN CLUB's *Fire of Love* featured swampy, dark-hued bluesy punk. Jeffrey Lee Pierce soulfully croons, along with the occasional hell-raising whoop. Seamless transitions from soft to loud and back again, paying tribute to the original bluesmen but wrapping it inside of a barbed concoction. Some of the lyrics are spine-tingling, such as with "For The Love Of Ivy": "I'm gonna buy me a graveyard of my own / and kill everyone who ever done me wrong / I'm gonna buy me a gun just as long as my arm / and kill everyone who ever done me harm." I admit I sing that from time to time when feeling a bit put-upon. A great album to listen to when driving late at night, especially through rural backwoods.

The other Ruby release was the second album from the FLESH EATERS, *A Minute To Pray, a Second To Die,* which was a complete overhaul from the frenetic punk of their previous *All Questions Asked* album. With an extended lineup that included people from X, the BLASTERS and LOS LOBOS, it was a mixture of razor-sharp guitar lines, growling and atonal sax, and even marimbas, creating a mutant voodoo punk stew (something like that). Chris D's vocals could wake the dead, especially his shrieks on "See You In The Boneyard." It's almost joyful sounding but also scary as fuck. This was the only disc with this lineup, as Chris scaled back to a more compact grouping for the subsequent *Forever Came Today,* with saxman Steve Berlin the only holdover. I can't really think of any other record that sounds like this one.

BLACK FLAG, of course, were an established band by then but put out three pivotal records that year—the *Six Pack* EP and "Louie Louie / Damaged" single, with Dez Cadena on vocals, and then *Damaged,* with the newly-recruited Henry Rollins taking over the mic. I know there are naysayers who claim that Rollins ruined FLAG. I don't buy into that assessment—each of the band's four vocalists had their merits and I'm actually most-partial to Dez's glass-gargling howl. *Damaged,* though, is fierce throughout, save perhaps the novelty-esque "TV Party."

DEAD KENNEDYS' *In God We Trust, Inc.* was something of a jump on the hardcore express and doesn't really stack up to *Fresh Fruit* or *Plastic Surgery Disasters* but the back-to-back "Religious Vomit" and "Moral Marjority" capture the dawn of the Reagan era pretty well. Actually, the most important release on Alternative Tentacles that year was the *Let Them Eat Jellybeans* compilation which was probably an entry point for many novices into the punk underground, serving up crucial tracks by BAD BRAINS, BLACK FLAG, FLIPPER, CIRCLE JERKS, REALLY RED, and even the FEEDERZ' scabrous classic "Jesus Entering From The Rear." There were excursions into artier punk forms, as well.

FLIPPER were raising holy hell in the Bay Area that year with the repetitive, annoying-in-a-great way "Love Canal / Ha-Ha-Ha" and "Sex Bomb / Brainwash" singles. The latter paired a song about the demise of blonde bombshell Jayne Mansfield (that's what the crash at the end of the song is) with the endless torture of "Brainwash." A cruel DJ on one of the Boston college stations once played that song for 45 straight minutes.

After a couple of 7" releases, the MINUTEMEN's debut 12" *The Punch Line* continued the band's kinetic, punky and funky oeuvre, with only two of its eighteen songs topping the one-minute mark. SACCHARINE TRUST'S *Paganicons* 12" had a similar muse although the songs were longer and Joe Breuer's vocals cut hard against the grain. MEAT PUPPETS' debut 7' *In A Car* dished out fast 'n frenzied punk but you could tell they weren't going to be a one trick pony, not with the more country-inflected "Big House" or jazzier "Out In The Gardener." The Arizona sun was already baking their brains. Or maybe something else they ingested, if you catch my drift.

REALLY RED's overlooked classic debut 12" *Teaching You The Fear* (*finally* given a reissue on Alternative Tentacles a couple of years ago) moved punk and post-punk into challenging realms. Like REALLY RED, the BIG BOYS were, of course, also from Texas and *Where's My Towel? / Industry Standard* was their first studio 12", following the *Frat Cars* 7" and split live record with the DICKS. The BIG BOYS certainly expanded any definition of punk and were also coming from a funky / punk muse à la the MINUTEMEN and, as with that band, they could play their asses off but weren't show-offs.

Of course, 1981 was the year hardcore exploded all over the US. In DC, the burgeoning Dischord label already had the TEEN IDLES 7" under their belts but, during '81, they unleashed both MINOR THREAT 7's, SOA's *No Policy*, YOUTH BRIGADE's *Possible* EP, and GOVERNMENT ISSUE's *Legless Bull*. Not a bad year's work. Touch and Go records weren't exactly slacking either, not with the likes of the FIX's *Vengeance* and *Jan's Rooms* EPs, the first two NECROS 7"s and the *Process of Elimination* compilation 7", which marked NEGATIVE APPROACH's boiling-over debut. TOXIC REASONS appeared on that comp and made more noise with their *Ghost Town* 7" (following 1980s' *War Hero*) featuring Ed Pittman's sandpapery snarl and a feisty punk attack, adding a reggae inflection for the title track. Chicago's EFFIGIES made their vinyl bow on the *Busted At Oz* compilation and their own *Haunted Town* EP. Not really hardcore but packing one hell of a wallop and the live footage of them in the *You Weren't There* documentary of Chicago punk is worth the price by itself.

As far as I know, the first band to use "hardcore" in a record title was DOA, for their second 12" *Hardcore '81*. They'd been around since '77 but made things louder and faster, without losing the melodic sensibility that informed their previous recordings. I remember picking this one up on the same shopping trip as their *Something Better Change* album and, at first, was taken aback by having shelled out $8.50 for a relatively short EP but after getting it home and spinning it three or four times in row, any sense of being shortchanged quickly disappeared. Quality, not quantity, right?

I perhaps use the term groundbreaking more than I should but it really applies to the WIPERS' masterpiece *Youth of America*. The title track is a ten-minute tour-de-force showcasing Greg Sage's mindblowing guitar wizardry. It's as much about tone as dexterity and no one has come close to matching it, even though more bands have been influenced by these guys (Sage, really—it's his baby) in recent years. Nor have those bands been able to replicate the emotional heft in his vocals and lyrics. 1979's *Is This Real* sounded like little else that year and had a more economical, punky attack, while *Youth of America* was a more expansive work.

Lest you think I was only paying attention to what was going on in the States, there was plenty going on overseas, as well. DISCHARGE continued to rewrite the book for loud and fast music and 1981 yielded their *Why* 12" and *Never Again* EPs, building on the primitivism of the first 7"s and setting the stage for the sonic bombast that would occur the next year with *Hear Nothing, See Nothing, Say Nothing* and the *State Violence State Control* 7". DISORDER were creating a crazier-sounding creation on their first two 7"s, *Complete Disorder* and *Distortion to Deafness*, both of which helped create the noisy blueprint followed by the early Finnish hardcore bands and many others since then. Mean, loud, and fast punk definitely made its presence felt in the UK that year and the floodgates opened in 1982.

Two other UK bands' sophomore efforts stood out that year—KILLING JOKE's *What's THIS For* and GANG OF FOUR'S *Solid Gold* LPs (as well as the *To Hell With Poverty* 7"). Whereas KILLING JOKE's self-titled first album (following a few earlier EPs) had more of a lumbering and crushing sound, *What's THIS For* was looser and more rhythmic, although there was an ominously noisy cloud hovering over the proceedings. *Solid Gold* had a more spacious, tension-and-release feel than the GANG's debut, although songs like the churning "What We All Want" and thumping "Cheeseburger" were quite direct. Even PUBLIC IMAGE LTD's third album, *The Flowers of Romance*, tried something different—having lost bassist Jah Wobble, the remaining core of John Lydon and Keith Levene mainly built the songs around drums and synth, sparingly using guitar and bass. The last PIL album remotely worth hearing. "Banging The Door," with hammering drumming by Martin Atkins (who appeared on about half the tracks), is the standout.

UK anarcho-punk was coming into full-flower and two memorable debuts came from FLUX OF PINK INDIANS and RUDIMENTARY PENI. FLUX's "Tube Disasters," bookended by two spoken word passages, is a catchy punk anthem. PENI dish out a dozen succinct blasts of stripped-down punk, punctuated by Nick Blinko's edge-of-psychosis vocals.

I wasn't as familiar with non-US / Canadian / UK punk at that point. I know Japanese band the STALIN's *Trash* came out that year and cut a pretty original punk path, with strains of the '77 era, post-punk and anarcho stylings. In all honesty, though, I didn't hear that band until much later on.

I'm sure I missed a lot, especially from the non-English speaking world, but the records I've covered here make a compelling argument for 1981 being a crucial year, the bridge between the '77 era and what followed throughout the '80s. Many of those bands' influence can be felt to this day.

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futures
and
pasts
*erika elizabeth

At this point, I'm sure that pretty much anyone who even occasionally skims through my column is already aware of the recent *Subnormal Girls* compilation LP of female-fronted post-punk and weirdo DIY culled from the years 1979 to 1983, as I can't remember the last time that so many people in my immediate friend circle were simultaneously making comments along the lines of "have you heard about *this!?*" in response to the announcement of a new record becoming available. And with good reason, really—I certainly don't have the bank account needed to cover the $250 current going rate for a copy of the lone 1981 single from flipped-out Californian synth-punk duo IUD, or even the $100 or so that ART OBJECT's 1980 top-shelf KBD 7" *Ride the Metro* will probably set you back, and I'm guessing that I'm not alone in that sentiment. *Subnormal Girls* fulfills the vital public service of making available some otherwise largely-inaccessible (at least in a physical format) recordings from some of history's overlooked punk women, covering an impressively diverse range of both approaches to DIY noise-making and geographical representation.

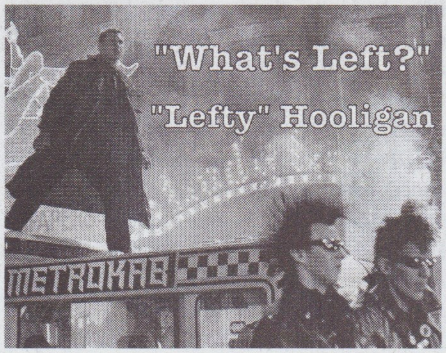
Highlights from an already all killer / no filler LP: I've talked about the genius preteen post-punk CHANDRA in these pages before, but her warped, early '80s New York no wave-schooled anthem "Subways" is also included here, just in case you need any further incentive to pick up the reissue of her 1980 *Transportation* EP (seriously, just go do it already). "Boule Quies" from France's ZONA originally appeared only on a 1982 post-punk / coldwave compilation LP called *Paris Mix*, and the combination of a rubbery bass hook with needling guitar, twitchy drumbeats and shouty girl vocals is essentially everything that I love about the genre distilled into a lean minute and a half. KONTROLA W's "Bossa Nova" was previously only available on a late '90s cassette and CD collection featuring the posthumous works of four 1980s Polish punk and new wave bands, and it's certainly one of the lesser-known gems for me here, with an absolutely perfect juxtaposition of trilling female vocals (with a male counterpart jumping in for an almost John / Exene sort of thing in the chorus) and a delirious, bass-anchored hopscotch rhythm. There's also the ecstatically ramshackle DIY bash of "Liar" by MORBID OPERA, JUNGLE NAUSEA's jittery avant-punk mindbender "Sympathy," the choppy nearly-new wave of "Monkey Monkey" from Japan's BOYS BOYS (with that wacked-out, infectious closing chorus of "*monkey dance, monkey dance, monkey dance*"). Best comp of the year, and I'll fight you if you say otherwise. It's apparently out of print from the label now, but I'll bet if you scour some shops and distros, you might turn one up. (Waiting Room Records, waitingroomrecords.bandcamp.com)

Digging back into the same archive of (mostly) one-single wonders from the late '70s / early '80s femme-punk golden era that the first volume of *Subnormal Girls* so successfully mined, OUT ON BLUE SIX would be right at place on any subsequent installments that might currently be in the works. Other than a handful of compilation tracks that surfaced in the early 1980s, the group's discography begins and ends with the brilliant *Party Mood* 7" from 1981, featuring three songs worth of slash and burn, insistently danceable post-punk. The title track and "Johnny" both have the totally ultra-rhythmic, percussion-driven mutant disco vibe shared by 99 Records bands like MAXIMUM JOY or ESG, with vocalist Katie Sekules' rapid-fire lyrical delivery adding an urgency and tension that's more cutting than some of OUT ON BLUE SIX's more dancefloor-oriented peers (guitarist Carl Marsh *did* later go on to play in Dave Allen's post-GANG OF FOUR project SHRIEKBACK, for what it's worth). The B-side's "Mogadon Sunday" strays ever so slightly from that path, echoing the dub-indebted spaciousness of the SLITS or later period ESSENTIAL LOGIC with a foundation of metronomic drumming and cavernous-sounding bass, as some skeletal and wiry guitar lines and Sekules' multi-tracked vocals slowly weave into the mix. Beyond great, both sides. Added bonus: unlike the groups collected on *Subnormal Girls*, OUT ON BLUE SIX aren't exactly fetching collector scum prices with this single, and it's worth well more than the ten or so bucks that a copy will likely set you back. Go forth, fellow thrifty scholars of femme-punk.

I hadn't been back to Massachusetts since I moved to Portland three years ago, but I finally got the chance to take a quick trip to Boston last month, while squeezing in an even quicker side-trip to Northampton, my former town of residence for what now seems like a completely surreal timespan of eight years. You know those situations where you come across certain records with such frequency, usually because they originated from your general homebase and are probably being slowly recirculated from boxes stuffed away in your neighbors' attics, that you get sort of cocky and repeatedly tell yourself "Oh whatever, I'll just pick that up later" so that you can prioritize buying something more comparatively elusive time and time again? Well, lesson learned, because sometimes you move 3000 miles away and those old Propeller Product singles suddenly aren't as abundant and/or inexpensive as they were when you were working at a record store an hour and a half outside of Boston. I managed to right some of those previous short-sighted wrongs while I found myself back on the East Coast, and one of the records that I was most excited to bring home to the Northwest with me was NATIVE TONGUE's *Yowl* LP from 1983. Comparisons to MISSION OF BURMA aren't completely unwarranted given the shared "Bostonians playing arty, dissonant post-punk" framework that the two bands were working within (there's some clear parallels between the desperate urgency of *Yowl*'s "Hoodwinked" and, say, BURMA's singular "Peking Spring"), although NATIVE TONGUE are much more likely to fall into GANG OF FOUR or PYLON-style frantically angular dance patterns with brittle stabs of guitar over interlocked bass and drums—both "Bit Part" and "No Bush Beat" sound like the next logical step in the chronological progression from *Entertainment!* to *Gyrate*. The whole LP is wonderful, but the real reason that you need to track this one down? The shadowy "Blame It On Gravity," with its overlapping dual vocals chanted in detached monotones and some of the most scalpel-edged guitar jangle that I've ever heard knotted into some seriously sinister harmonies. It's as perfect of a song as any of the now-canonized anthems of the '80s American post-punk underground—"Academy Fight Song," "Youth of America," "The Girl Who Lives On Heaven Hill," you name it.

In more contemporary concerns, the debut cassette from Detroit's the VITAS is totally ace, pairing smudged, shambling pop in the post-C86 tradition with the scratchy guitarwork, slightly off-kilter rhythms and yelped vocals of the more econo-minded UK / US post-punks of '78–'83. "Wednesday Morning" and "Parakeet" both have the sort of bent melodies and frenetic chime as the similarly-inclined BRILLIANT COLORS before them, though the VITAS strip things down to an even more spartan crash-pop extreme—there's no densely-layered fuzz and reverb to hide behind here. Elsewhere, the steady-yet-sparse drumming (snare and tom-centric with minimal cymbal punctuation) and smartly repetitive and understated bass flutter that hold the more post-punk leaning moments together (see "Roses" or "Whole Coast") points to a certain influence from the spiky, rough and tumble sound of early Rough Trade heroines like KLEENEX. The first wave of scrappy DIY punks tore down rockist ideals of what constituted acceptable standards of musical proficiency by embracing an "anyone can do it" three-chords-or-less worldview, and with the nine short and sweet songs on this tape, the VITAS are similarly deconstructing that widely-regarded mainstream archetype of the three-minute pop number—if you can bang it out in two minutes or less, then why in the hell wouldn't you? (Gingko Records, thevitas.bandcamp.com)

Say hey! Analog: Erika Elizabeth / 2545 E. Burnside Street #203 / Portland, OR 97214 / USA, digital: ripitupstartagain@gmail.com, more sights and sounds: futuresandpasts.org



I don't recollect the TV commercial in question, but everything is available via YouTube nowadays. I do remember the controversy surrounding it. A cute, freckled, blonde-haired little girl is in a field of flowers picking the petals off a daisy, counting them out as she goes. When she picks the last petal, a countdown begins, she looks up, and the camera dives deep into her eye. A thermonuclear explosion goes off against the black background as a snippet of Barry Goldwater's speech laying out his perceived choice before god between love and annihilation plays. Then the final verbal message, the stakes are too high, plays over a title card plea to elect Lyndon Johnson president in 1964. It was the first time I was aware of someone warning against potential Republican fascism, and that only obliquely in a vague, entirely *faux* "liberty or death" sort of way.

The whole world was exploding in 1968, or so it seemed. Paris, France and Prague, Czechoslovakia experienced a short-lived revolutionary spring; the guerrilla Tet Offensive raged throughout South Vietnam; the Mexican army brutally massacred students in Mexico City; Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated and riots erupted across the US; Robert Kennedy was also gunned down; a police riot at the Democratic National Convention brought Richard Nixon to power—these were but a few of the events that politicized me. I became an anarchist and went from a pious pacifism to wanting to join a rapidly radicalizing SDS, which by that time was tearing itself apart thanks to New Left sectarianism. My precipitous political development had me believing that Nixon—the law-and-order candidate—would round up all the hippies into labor camps, shoot black people on sight, and usher in a red-white-and-blue fascism. With the ratification of the 26th Amendment, which lowered the voting age to 18, I immediately registered to vote Peace and Freedom Party. In 1972, I voted for the People's Party's presidential candidate Benjamin Spock in the primaries and George McGovern in the national election.

Living in San Diego by 1980, I was a full-on lefty anarcho making a transition to commie ultraleftism. Ronald Reagan was running for president. As California's governor, Reagan had said in reference to quelling riotous student protesters: "If it takes a bloodbath, let's get it over with. No more appeasement." No wonder me and my fellow lefties, and many liberals to boot, thought that Reagan would call "action" on a Hollywood version of fascism for the country when he got elected. Reagan liked to start and finish his various political campaigns in San Diego for superstitious good luck, so I was part of the protest at the Chargers / Padres sports stadium that hoped to "welcome" the newly elected President Reagan into office. My girlfriend got into a scuffle with a cop and I spent the rest of the evening bailing her out of jail. In hindsight, Hinkley did a far better job in welcoming Reagan to the presidency, but the left of the Left was fully prepared for some Weimar-style street fighting. It was bullets, not ballots, or so we thought.

These Republican campaigns helped move American politics inexorably to the right, but they did not bring about a homegrown fascism. Indeed, the Democratic campaigns of Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and even Barack Obama also contributed in their own ways to the rightwing drift of US politics without actually inaugurating fascism proper. So now we're being told by various liberals and progressives that Donald Trump represents more than your ordinary everyday run-of-the-mill rightwing, authoritarian, racist, nationalist politics; that he actually steps over the line into fascism proper, capital "F" Fascism if you will; and that we have no choice but to do everything in our power to elect Hillary Clinton, up to and including what Bill Maher recently suggested by warning: "Every cause has to take a back seat to defeating Trump. He's like an infection, you don't fool around with it. […] There's no room for boutique issues in an armageddon election."

Bullshit!

An article in *The Economist* entitled "Past and future Trumps" (7-16-16) argues that Republican Trump fits the strongman type, much like the dictatorial *caudillos* of Latin America, but with an Anglo-American emphasis on nativism, isolationism, and populism. This election pits him against Democrat Clinton who is a corporatist, globalist, and multiculturalist, and it behooves us to remember that the Democrats and Republicans are two sides of the same coin. Or as Gore Vidal once quipped: "There is only one party in the United States, the Property Party…and it has two right wings: Republican and Democrat." There actually might be more than a dime's worth of difference between the Democrats and Republicans this election, to paraphrase George Wallace, but both are rightwing parties bent on taking the US further to the right, one in a free-trade globalist direction and the other in a protectionist nationalist way.

So, which is it? Are the Democrats and Republicans fundamentally the same? Or are there differences that make a difference between the two parties? Is Trump your usual rightwing Republican asshole? Or is he a fascist-in-the-making, a crypto-fascist, an ordinary fascist, or a formal Fascist? Perhaps I should make up my mind.

In keeping with the Wayback Machine theme this column started with, we of the '60s persuasion tended to call anything even remotely rightwing, authoritarian, racist, or nationalist "fascist" all the time. Our rather indiscriminate use of the epithet to broadly tar our political opponents tended to degrade the English language, not to mention any political discourse so that the term eventually became meaningless. It also obscured some real important political distinctions. Take black men for instance. Compared to white men, their unemployment rates are over twice as high, their incomes are less than one sixth, and their incarceration rates are nearly six and a half times as much. Could they justifiably claim they already live under some form of fascism, whether capital "F" or not, especially when compared to their white counterparts?

Some differentiation is thus in order, and we'll start by defining fascism. Fascism began coalescing as a distinct rightwing politic during the first World War, gained ground in various European political movements in the interwar years before taking power in Italy and Germany, cohered like-minded regimes and political movements around a political / military alliance, finally to fight and lose the second World War. Not only do I consider fascism as encompassing both Italian Fascism and German Nazism, I think its military defeat in 1945 means that what we're dealing with today is a neo-Fascist / neo-Nazi movement substantially changed by that defeat and by fascism's propensity for political synchronicity, yet one still committed to a fascist minimum, a generic fascist core ideology. In the bewildering academic tangle that is Fascist Studies, I side with Roger Griffin who argues that:

> [F]ascism is best defined as a revolutionary form of nationalism, one that sets out to be a political, social and ethical revolution, welding the 'people' into a dynamic national community under new elites infused with heroic values. The core myth that inspires this project is that only a populist, trans-class movement of purifying, cathartic national rebirth (palingenesis) can stem the tide of decadence.

So while Trump's alt.right fanboys definitely are fascists, as are many of his good-ol-boy back slapping paleoconservative followers, Trump himself is not a fascist. And no quantity of "Make America Great" made-in-China red baseball caps can make his clownish, blowhard politics into some kind of revolutionary palingenetic nationalism. He's a demagogic schoolyard bully along the lines of Huey Long, but a more up-to-date comparison might be to Silvio Berlusconi. That's not to say his campaign does not give aid-and-comfort to American fascists, or reinforce some of the more reactionary aspects of US politics, and therefore should be defeated. Yet the liberal / progressive scare mongering that we are on the eve of goose-stepping into a Donald Trump presidency is way overblown.

Ah, but wasn't Juan Perón one of those Latin American *caudillos* who promulgated a variation of fascism and aligned himself with the Axis powers during the second World War? And didn't Gilles Dauvé argue, writing as Jean Barrot in "Fascism / Anti-Fascism," that "Fascism was a particular episode in the evolution of Capital towards totalitarianism, an evolution in which democracy has played and still plays a role as counter-revolutionary as that of fascism," and thus that fascism and democracy are but two faces of the capitalist state? Couldn't US democracy turn on a dime and become fascism?

Yes, and no. Dauvé's overly simplistic and somewhat dogmatic analysis posits a unitary capitalist state run by a unified capitalist ruling class where fascism is one of that state's and class's unified responses to a capitalism in crisis when democracy no longer works. (Another implication of Dauvé's opposition to antifascism—that we don't need to combat fascism—is belied by a like-minded ultraleft that never held back from fighting fascists.) This vulgar, mechanistic, ultraleft interpretation of Marx's famous quote that "[t]he executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole *bourgeoisie*" does Marxism no favors.

We can agree that fascism is a special case of generic rightwing politics, and that American politics are of a piece left and right, without clearly grasping the relationship of one to the other. I suggest a little less Hegelian dialectics and a little more Heisenbergian simultaneity, in particular the latter's uncertainty principle in which light is defined as simultaneously a wave and a particle. The idea that two contradictory things can also constitute a kind of unity doesn't sit well with the more linearly-minded among us. Light is both particle and wave. A singular American party politics is both rightwing and leftwing, Republican and Democratic. Fascism is both a part of generic rightwing politics and *sui generis*. This duality also applies to behavior, in that we can simultaneously hold that US electoral politics are irredeemably corrupt while voting for the lesser of two evils, or realize that the capitalist ruling class has democratic and fascist faces in power while fighting that fascism in the streets. Two things can be fundamentally the same and yet crucially different.

Personally, I square this circle by not investing too much in the analysis or the actions in any particular case. Yes, US winner-take-all, ideologically narrow party politics are shit, but I don't endorse third party nonsense or pie-in-the-sky calls for world revolution. Nor do I make a big deal of voting for the lesser of two evils, whether that's Clinton over Trump or Sanders over Clinton. And make no mistake, Bernie is still the lesser of two evils. Yes, the *bourgeoisie* has democratic and fascist options when dealing with a capitalism in crisis, but I don't deny that black people face a more fascistic existence in this country than do white people. Nor do I denigrate those who would fight fascists in the streets even though I don't agree that the fight against fascism must be the be-all-and-end-all to our politics.

This is part of the centuries-old debate on the Left pitting reform against revolution. I never subscribed to the notion, popular in the '60s, that "the revolution" will happen sooner if we eschew liberal reforms or if reactionary politicians are elected. Nor do I buy into the myth that winning a string of incremental reforms brings us any closer to social revolution, let alone socialism, even while I acknowledge that incremental reforms do make a difference in the lives of ordinary people. The point is to be engaged in social change—whether incremental or revolutionary—without attachment, in the spirit of "When you are hungry, eat; when you are tired, sleep." More on that next column.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA

I am having a book launch for my second novel, 1% Free, *on Thursday, November 3, 2016 at Book Passage Bookstore in the San Francisco Ferry Building.*

Personal blog: gamatiasz.wordpress.com

Political blog: leftyhooligan.wordpress.com

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Writer Facebook page: facebook.com/GA-Matiasz-1729198467311786

Publishing Facebook page: facebook.com/62-Mile-Press-190746624637105.

Publishing website: 62milepress.com

i don't think that i need to sit here with you fucking dildos any more

by Imogen Binnie

This column is all over the place—it's like three days late because I've been traveling and I'm hella tired. I figured I'd write it on the plane on my way home or something, but I'm an idiot. I don't know why I ever think I'm gonna be able to get anything done when I'm traveling. I start and immediately abandon tour diaries. Emails pile up. I always assume that somehow I'm going to learn to relax, while I'm traveling, and also learn to manage my time and be responsible. But I'm old, dude. It's not going to happen.

Anyway I wanted to write something really smart for you about how like, around adolescence you start to realize that something is kinda fishy. I mean, maybe this isn't you. Me. Probably some other people, too. You just like figure out that the stories about this culture that we tell in this culture are…inaccurate? Like you look around and realize that inequality is a thing, that politicians probably can't save us the way they seem to think they can, that kinda stuff. Chivalry is bullshit. Capitalism is a trap. You know. And then punk stuff shows up and you're like, nice, these punkers have figured it out, the government is bad, cops are bad, I should get a stupid haircut, it would be worth my time to learn a lot of information about fucking bands.

Y'know. Change your own variables as appropriate. Classic punk stuff.

I've been thinking about that analysis, and how on some level we each make an individual decision about how deep to go with it. Like, I think a lot of us, we just go as deep as it affects us directly as individuals. Using myself as an example, before I figured out I was trans, when I thought I was just a really sad and repressed type of straight white cis boy, my analysis was just *amazingly* shallow. I mean, I feel like all I do in this column is talk shit about myself at eighteen, but we probably should all be talking shit about ourselves from when we were eighteen. (Unless you're eighteen now, or not eighteen yet, in which case give it a couple years. You'll get there. If you don't eventually come to think you were an idiot at eighteen, you are probably a jerk.) (Or actually maybe you died young?) And even through my early twenties, basically until I put together that I was trans and that the world wasn't gonna be handed to me any more, I was such an idiot. I mean I was sure I was really smart, that I had this great analysis and knew how the world worked—and to some extent I had sorta figured some stuff out. But I was still doing the thing where you establish dominance in some way all the time, either by trying to be the coolest one in the room or by being the smartest expert around on some bullshit—probably bands—or by otherwise embodying patriarchal/colonizer ways of existing. Basically I sort of knew *of* the theory, but I still had shit for praxis.

And then I came out and realized that it didn't matter how much I knew or whatever, I was never going to get to be the cool guy in the room again. Then I figure out that I probably never was in the first place. And THAT's when I first actually started to understand the way the world works. I mean, not that I've solved it, or that I even really do a good job of it. I'm just some idiot who smokes too much weed and has anxiety attacks like four times every day, who knows that those two things are probably linked but doesn't do anything about it. But I'm less of an idiot than I was when I was younger and one of the things that I've figured out—the thing that I wanted to talk about here—is how easy it is to have an analysis that only really understands stuff 'til it gets to you and then stops. You know what I mean?

For example.

It's really easy to be a white person with a shitty, self-serving analysis around race and racism, but still to feel like you're really smart and like you're doing a great job. To feel like your analysis is on point. You know what I mean? It's really easy to be a cis person with some shallow, self-serving beliefs about what trans people are like and what it's like to be a trans person.

We—idiots, punkers, jerks, people, I don't know, us—we tend to either make the leap to understanding that the lies our culture tells about itself aren't just about ourselves. But then you sort of have this decision to make—do you extend the empathy you have for yourself, which led to your learning to grasp concepts that are kinda complicated (like privilege or patriarchy) to other people? Do you learn to have an analysis that incorporates the oppression of people who aren't you—even if you're implicated in that oppression?

A lot of us don't. So it's funny—you do all this work to understand things like institutional racism, or cisnormativity, and you get to a place where you understand them. Where they actually explain things that don't make sense otherwise. And you get to kind of a weird, esoteric place? Like where you just know that other people aren't going to get it, because not everybody can be bothered, for example, to actually listen to the points that (for example) Black Lives Matter are making.

It's this weird ideological logjam and it's super frustrating because the people who haven't bothered to do this work, to make this sense, are always the ones who don't have to, because they have cultural capital and power and don't have to. Their analyses—their empathy—can stop at their own bodies.

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Maybe you've heard that flying on airplanes in America as a trans person kind of blows. There's all this security theater in place to make affluent white Americans feel safe and it doesn't really matter whether the intention is to make flying kind of blow for everybody else or not, because either way it does. In the smart version of this column—the one that I write in the alternate timeline where I'm not exhausted and spacey—I'd connect the stuff I was talking about a minute ago to this phenomenon where I used to try to go through the body scanner (AKA trans woman outing machine) and hope for the best but inevitably get humiliated by a buzzer and a publicly visible diagram and then humiliated again by a mandatory pat-down, but a couple years ago Alex was opting out of the body scanner so I started opting out too and a weird thing happened.

The power dynamic changes. Like, you ask to opt out, and I guess they read me correctly enough to assign me a female TSA agent for my invasive, kinda horrifying mandatory pat-down. Every time I go "I want you to know that I opted out because I'm transgender" and every time the TSA agent has this weird moment of nervousness, like they don't know what to do with that. Like suddenly I'm in a position of power, at least relative to this poor person who is about to touch my junk? I mean, I only come out to them because they're about to touch my junk and I don't want that to be any more traumatic for me than it has to. But for them it's almost always like they don't know what to do with that information. They might have had five minutes of training about what to do when a trans person comes through the line, but it's this weird inversion where suddenly the actual power dynamic—where we're both being exploited by capitalism and the political imperatives of airline security theater in the 2010s—suddenly becomes clear, and then everyone feels like shit.

I mean there's something there about the fact that these TSA employees rarely seem to have much of an analysis around trans stuff, and how it doesn't matter what the intention of this security theater is because its effects are more marginalization of trans people and workers. It would've blown your fucking mind if I had been able to make this point clearly.

But I'm exhausted. And every column can't be a home run though.

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Related: people love to talk shit about Social Justice Warriors when the reality is that the people you'd call Social Justice Warriors are mostly just young people figuring out where they fit into the world and being obnoxious about it. And look: who among us has not done that? Are you going to tell me you weren't an obnoxious idiot teenager? It might've looked different when you did it but I think it's hilarious how "get off my lawn" / "kids these days" people get about young people who give a fuck about shit—and old people tryna keep up—but it actually makes a lot of sense if you think about it in terms of actual analysis versus self-serving analysis. You know what I mean? If you're thinking shit through it seems pretty clear that young people tryna change the world for the better are going to do it kinda clumsily, and probably either you never wanted this shitty world to be any better in the first place or else you're lying to yourself about whether you were kind of a jerk when you were younger.

I dunno, man. I also wanted to say some stuff about the time just after high school where one of my closest friends became a nazi and the last time I went to his house he had this huge fucking third reich flag stretched out across the wall above his bed—how I used to go to his house and get drunk every Thanksgiving, how much emotional caretaking I can see in retrospect that I did for him when we were still friends—and how I came out not long after that and how like a decade and a half later I still look over my shoulder whenever I'm anywhere near that town, and to connect that with what I guess is a conversation again about whether reviewing bands with proud white supremacists in *MRR* helps or hurts the stated intention here of having more stuff by and for queer punkers and punkers of color in these pages. But what the fuck do I know. Turbo, you seem great but I'd vote against it.

It would have been sick as fuck to make all these points coherently though, huh?

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Let's talk about bands. I know a lot about bands.

New DAKHMA! The Grand Rapids DAKHMA, not the one from Europe or something. The new album is called *Suna Kulto* and they just keep getting better—highly recommended if you like twenty minute stretches of blastbeats and screaming. I also finally got a vinyl copy of their album *Raze*, which fucking destroys and also is beautiful. It's screen-printed or something.

MRR slammed the shit out of the last SVALBARD album, *One Day All Of This Will End*, but that album rules and Halo Of Flies is doing a double LP of their collected 2012–2014 recordings that's gonna rule too. They do seem to utilize a producer or producers though. Caveat Emptor.

WEAK WRISTS is a band from Asheville that did a fucking killer demo in 2014 and Halo Of Flies is doing an LP from them, too. Halo of Flies: killing it. So stoked for this.

DAKHMA, SVALBARD and WEAK WRISTS all play versions of blackened crust or whatever the fuck that genre is. The best genre of music. (Except for Oi!.) That's it! Now I'm gonna smoke a bunch of weed and go to sleep anxious.

THIS WORLD
MAKES ME
RALPH

FULL BODY GREY

Nothing's doing, though not for lack of trying. I've sat down numerous times over the past few months to set ink to paper for this here august punk rock rag, sketched out bones and bulk and big lightbulb brains, but it lacked sinew. There was no feeling. I figure art, music, literature, paint splashed on a canvas, whatever flavor ya savor, for this sorta incandescent, sentient multiverse, energy and emotion and ideas incarnate. Of course, I acknowledge the fairly limited application of that belief in practice. This joint is just lousy with kitsch shillers and used car dealers, schlubby non-entities regurgitating the reconstituted gristle of others' hard labor, but let's spare them and continue on with this typically lengthy metaphor. I picture music journalism as a massive, miasmal pit situated somewhere out in the dark matter and just imagine the cretins that dwell-within! Their sweat-saturated brows creasing furiously as the calloused nubs at the ends of their flaking, pallid limbs flail achingly towards that multiversal nectar. Oh, for a taste! But what would they do with it? You've seen how they respond to just drops on the tongue, hoarding and keeping inventory, as though stacking just one more obscure reference or OOP bonzer beneath their scaly feet could lift them over and out of their perpetual vapidity.

You know, now that you're asking, I have to answer honestly. I don't always enjoy writing about music. I enjoy reading about it an equal amount less. Record reviews skew towards a bump it or dump it dichotomy or become rote slogs through an author's esoteric punk knowledge, resume building for future *Noisey* contributors. Interviews operate as ego-stroking fluff pieces, avoiding tough questions and honest criticism, lest you bum out your buds. While I believe *Maximum* largely offers an alternative to this paradigm, over the course of the past few months, I became increasingly self-conscious that I was a weak link contributing to this abject hackery. Low esteem or just high awareness? I'm still leanin' towards the latter, but who's to say, really? Concurrent to this, my habit of willfully, gleefully provoking conflict with people whose opinions I have no respect for caught up with me. Think like shit, feel like shit. So, I took some time off. Watched great bands play in a sweat-soaked quarter pipe, played in a barn. Observed and caught up on the columns I look forward to most, scoured the top tens for genius unheard. Finally took care of the most obvious impediment to my enjoyment of music and got my receiver fucking "fixed." Turns out, plugging electronics into functioning outlets will power them right up. Read comics all summer, gleaning inspiration from the most philosophical, post-graphic novel fare down to the campy antics of talking ducks and girls with squirrels for friends. Rode my bike down side streets I've never seen, worked out more, talked shit less. A weekend down in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, petting dogs and watching Minor Threat and DKs cover sets, ultimately righted the course and thereby hangs a moral: if you hang out with a bunch of good people, in love with their town and committed to the people around them, if you remove yourself from the petty squabbling of the bored and the boring, if you move your mind in time with your ass, you'll remember what time it is, you dig?

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It's summer going on fall.

There's a stereotype of Midwesterners as ambulatory hats with ear flaps, as the physical avatar of any friendly greeting ending in "Dontcha Know." The truth is this place, Chicago especially, requires a sturdier constitution. Being born and raised here engenders you with a thicker skin, a louder, profaner mouth and a short temper. I've been known to relish these qualities, but it's no way to live 24/7. Feelings get hurt, people from faraway places try to keep up and turn colder and more bitter than could have previously been conceived. I don't ever wonder why people leave. A little under two years ago, I was ready to pack it in myself and head west or south or somewhere in between. But the thing is, between the outgoing lows of August's 105 degrees at 105% humidity days and the first frost of September, if I'm being generous, you've got a good week and a half of jeans, flannel, jacket weather to really breathe in what Chicago has to offer, both the history and the acrid blend of fish and chocolate, and that's enough. It's enough knowing that my dad and his family live less than a mile away, and my mom and hers aren't much further. Sometimes, it's enough to know that Sandra C lived at Paulina and Bloomingdale, that the streets here shook as Howlin' Wolf spoke. It's enough to know that this city is a world unto itself and even in 28 years I haven't seen a fraction of it. Dig it, this place lives and breathes with our lives and breaths, so here's some Chicagoan lives and breaths that have served as remembrance.

The, thee, porno, pornography, glo, glow, glows! It could be all or, perhaps, none of the above, they play as fast and loose with reality as they do with music. For our purposes, we'll call the cretins in question the PORNO GLOWS. This is *the* band in Chicago, the name that stumbles from the tongue, between the teeth, and through the lips, and has stretched from 0-8.5 inches 'cross every flier for six months. And why not? When I'm talking about the PORNO GLOWS, I'm talking about heads boppin', arms flailin', soul shakin' hardcore, a cosmic level shake-up to get down, a true, holistic approach to rock 'n' roll. While PORNO GLOWS is a distinct animal from the members' prior endeavors, it's more extrapolation than deviation. Kevin, formerly of BIG ZIT, has a voice that's as potent as ever. Still the big, bad, bastard baby of HR and David Lee Roth he's always been, this time around the boy flaunts his impressive range, howlin' well like Howlin' Pelle and crooning like David Jo, too.

On the topic of pedigreed players, there's not a rhythm section in all of punk that's gone more unappreciated and unacclaimed than Angelica and Isabella. Their work in consistently incredible outfits like DOMINADORA, COCHINA, and TEAZER deserves, at a minimum, the attention typically afforded to lesser, flavor of the week type puddery. They've brought over their predilection for cavewoman beats to the current big situation, though that's where the past and present start to diverge, with all these seemingly distant and disparate ideas gravitating towards collision, eventually forming a tectonic, unified whole. Those cro-magnon inclinations often give way to the bouncy, danceable rhythms showcased on the early Rough Trade catalogue—DELTA 5's "Colour" or "Read About Seymour" by SWELL MAPS come immediately to mind. The fuzzed-out, high treble guitar evokes the spirit of my favorite Beat Freaks the MONKS or THOR'S HAMMER when at its most raucous, but on tracks like "Daydreamin'," the band reaches an almost NERVES level of sugary sweetness. Ya got ta, got ta try a little tenderness. The songs adhere to a FLIPPER level of repetition, with riffs playing over and over with just slight detours or variations, but with the songs clocking in at about a fourth of the length of most FLIPPER tunes, there's a distinctly Midwestern succinctness, something more palatable to our *Cows and Beer* sensibilities. Now, none of this would be worth even a quarter-bin Triple B rekkid if the band wasn't fun to watch, so praise Roky that they're capital "C" cool to behold. There's a reasonable argument to be made that a singer pulls double duty to either a) hide from the full force of the spotlight behind their instrument or b) showboat rockstar virtuosity. Kevin does neither, instead playing as though the guitar is an extension of himself, in all the crude, wriggling, writhing glory you'd expect from his time in BIG ZIT. Angelica exudes the bubblegum-chewing aloofness of the gang in *Crybaby* or Poison Ivy Rorschach. For her part, Isabella pummels the kit until she's damn near death. The two new songs played at a recent show promise a bright future, so shuffle your way into a Bridgeport basement or beg them to come to your city, quick-like.

A few years ago, Martin Crudo did an interview that's stuck with me ever since. I can't recall all the specifics, though I remember the interviewer talking about CRUDOS' place in not just the broader "Punk" canon but also that of "Latino rock," and how they're perceived in some ways as both the start end points of brown presence in the subculture. Martin was quick to point out that whatever (I'd say profound and resonant) impact they've had, they were building off of a history, that before them there was ?, which may be a stretch, because he's actually a Martian. And there was ALICE BAG, the PLUGZ, the BRAT, and, you know, the best singer of BLACK FLAG, Ron Reyes, was Puerto Rican. Thankfully, a lot of work has been done to create space for more diverse voices in recent years, but at the time, my whole world grew exponentially. I felt a part of something bigger, and more a part of something that already held fast to a piece of my heart. I felt time reach out and grab a hold of me, ya feel? But here's the thing, more recently that those far off, far out, I had felt space reach out. About a decade or so ago, when I first started coming to shows in the city as a little Half-n-Half boy, there was a thriving scene here created and maintained by proud brown folk, based out of the south side Pilsen and Little Village neighborhoods. They put on their own shows (and put my first shitty band on 'em too), their own records, their own fests, and that shining chunk of space-time is getting due praise in the form of *Desafinados*, a week-long exhibit curated by Martin and many other participants of that era celebrating the individuals who built that it up. Names like CONDENADA, NO SLOGAN, and SIN ORDEN may have breached the local bubble, but lesser known outfits like NON FIKTION NOIS, ULTRATUMBADOS, SANGRE DE ABAJO, INTIFADA, and many more will get a more thorough examination. By the time this goes to print, it might already be over, but if you're brown, or are just interested in a more complete and honest history of punk, and happen to be in or around Chicago between September 30th and October 8th, do yourself a favor. Head to the Co-Prosperity Sphere at 3219 S Morgan and get learned.

ENDNOTES:

1) Reyes > Rollins > Morris >Dez. Fight me.

2) The future, as stated below, holds more Chicago junk. Before next month, listen to the new BLEEDING GUMS tape, look out for a new BRUISED release, pray for more PORNO GLOWS, weep that you haven't heard the new NEGATIVE SCANNER tracks.

3) Minneapolis is killing me. Listen to FUCKING, WILD COMBO, and TOUCHERS. For some shameless pluggery, listen to LEMONADE and keep the peepers peeled for their upcoming EP on NNT and Thrilling Living.

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TURBO
&
GANG
STILL THE NEW BREED

"This whole Tory government
is built on deceit.
They sell us on lies
and they always cheat.
Diggin' up this country
for their concrete walls,
Another office block
is like a kick in the balls!"
— Betrayed, "Knocking Down a Nation"

"Pissed my giro up the wall,
Cos I'm a cunt, a cunt, a cunt,
A cunt, a cunt, cunt."
—Hard Skin, "First Day Angry Song"

Blame the Bosses

Holy crap it's good to be back in U.S. of Yayya! The missus and me took a weekend trip to Niagara Falls and though we didn't actually leave thee United States (screw Canada) , we took a trip on the Maid of Mist so I think I can safely say I know what it's like to visit Mumbai. I don't even think Niagara Falls has a local population. The town is made up of tourists, hotel waitstaff, and under-qualified park rangers. We stayed at a bed and breakfast (like real assholes) and I gather that the dude who ran it hadn't seen the Falls in a decade (thanks Richard! It was great!). There was a dribble of dirty white kids loitering around but they were disinterested in the batshit crazy display of nature and were mostly into drugs and Pokémon. The future sucks so bad, I gotta throw shade. But who cares... Onwards to Oi!

STRANGLEHOLD – "Hold On" EP (Contra / Longshot Music): I don't always want melodic, rousing Oi!, but when I do STRANGLEHOLD is a band I call back on. Lisa, the singer, has an ashtray in her throat and sounds like a better Brody Dalle (an unavoidable comparison). Two of the other members are in MARCHING ORDERS, which lends STRANGLEHOLD a similar sound to that band and others on Contra and Longshot. When I'm in the mood (walking to the bus, buying new Levi's, working all day for me mate), those are all good things. When I'm not in the mood (now) this stuff makes my eyes roll right out of my head and into the cat litter box (blerf!). I don't doubt the sincerity of bands like STRANGLEHOLD but there are times when the anger gets lost in the polish. The songs are long (side B's "Fire" is over six minutes) and well-constructed. It reminds me of new country, or any popular music really. It's formulaic. Build up, to verse, to chorus, back to verse, bridge then repeat the chorus. Write lyrics in ballad form about some generic struggle (cuz again, it's vague) and add in a bar room full of whoa-ohs, and you got the new single standing on top of the skinhead hit parade. The download code gets you their cover of "That's Entertainment." I'm sure it's a smash live. Uh... compliment sandwich cookie: If you can't get enough of what the big Oi! labels are putting out, you won't be disappointed. (If this was a cookie, we'd call it a Snoreo.)

GRIT – "Ghost Estates" demo: Heave ho, you dummies! What we have here is six cuts of killer new Oi! out of Dublin! New Oi! is pop Oi!? We say no! If LEGION 76 had Jo Ball from the EXPELLED singing for them, it would approach what GRIT is laying down. I gotta say I'm surprised to learn that the folks who make up this band have mostly been in crust and D-beat outfits (RATS BLOOD, EASPA MEASA, BURNCHURCH). But who cares. I can be a real snob, but this is top quality. Their pedigree adds to the dark edge of the music and their lyrics. The song "Stray Bullet" contains these scathing words: "Pills and powders, it's just a lark / Have some fun, there's no harm done / Not your family being ripped apart / Fair trade coffee, union dues / Might cleanse your conscience / But can't you see the truth? / No one 'round your way ever had to dodge a stray bullet." You care, or you don't. We're glad to hear the band has plans on releasing this as a 7" in the coming months. Don't sleep on it. (gritdublin.bandcamp.com)

THE LAGERS – "Almería Oi!" demo: More demo Oi! THE LAGERS from Almería, Andalusia (no doi) are four young dudes producing fast-paced, hook-laden rock'n'oi! Wowza! This probably makes a great soundtrack to partying on the Mediterranean in jeans shorts and Sambas. Euro style, olé! Lay out your biggest beach towel and relax while listening to ten songs about being a skinhead living in Almería who gets drunk and parties with *los chicos* while making it through the work week. They cover "Oi! Oi! Oi!" by COCKNEY REJECTS and transform COCK SPARRER's classic "England Belongs to Me" into "Mi Barrio, Mi Ciudad." Both are done well but are superfluous. When I write my Riff Randall fan fiction, THE LAGERS are her favorite Oi! band. (thelagers.bandcamp.com)

SYNDROME 81 – "La Rouille Du Quotidien / Pulsions Électriques" (Build Me a Bomb): Oh, hey. It's another single from (100% not skins) SYNDROME 81. The newest 7" find them in standard form. "La Rouille Du Quotidien" is in their typical CRIM DAM / BLITZ style. It's good. The real surprise is "Pulsions Électriques," which is a cold wave synth track that most of you sand freaks and Santa Carla Vamps will adore. We (100% way skins) aren't so sure. If I want to hear this sound I'll listen to RUTH or KAS PRODUCT. Pope Girl has been dancing to the song, but I caught her twerking to a Farmers Insurance commercial the other day so her cred is on thin ice.

Holding this record I thought of one thing: the rapper, 50 CENT. Back when 50 CENT was really popular, after *Get Rich or Die Tryin'* but before *The Massacre*, he appeared on dozens of other artists' songs, remixes, and released multiple mixtapes with original verses. EMINEM gave him some advice that boiled down to "lay off the small shit, save it for an album." 50 CENT disregarded EMINEM's warning and look where it got him: Acting on some cable show with that stupid grin of his. Sure he's probably super rich and livin' better now in his Gucci sweater now, but all his albums since *GRoDT* have been wikkid terrible. He lost the juice and let his seed fly everywhere. We here at Gang HQ hope SYNDROME 81 haven't lost their special brand of *jus* and are working on that LP or at least a collection (à la ALTERNATE ACTION's *Thin Line*) so we can relax and stop flipping 7"s (the worst format).

NOI!SE – "Dull the Pain / Betrayed" (Pirates Press / Randale / Longshot Music): The boi!s (cough) in NOI!SE are back after a two year hi-Oi!-tus. Oi! puns! This is powerful music. I had to drag the La-Z-Boy over to the record player cuz I couldn't stop flipping this thing and my legs gave out. I used the speakers as a table and I ate lunch in front of the stereo, one hand shoving a hoagie into my mouth and the other constantly turning the record over. Their 2014 album *The Scars We Hide* was a near-perfect picture of strong and melodic street punk that was outlined with a silver edge of cynical snot. "Dull the Pain" and "Betrayed" would be standouts if they had appeared on that previous album. In a genre filled with piss takes, take offs, and pastiche, a band like NOI!SE is significant. The vocal tradeoff between Matt Henson and Nate Leinfelder is part of that defining sound. Top notch! These two songs are the herald of a forthcoming LP that will be out this fall. I'm sure it'll contain both the songs found here (the double A-side single is a gripe for another column) so at least you know it's guaranteed two good cuts. Until then The Gang and I will continue (over and over and over, again!) to keep flipping.

Bonus non-Oi! review: **DEATH HAS 1000 EARS – LP (Critical Fail):** I'm not a complicated guy. For reals, like 96% of the music I listen to is Oi! Partly because of this column, but mostly because I think when it's done well it's the best rock'n'roll can be, and when it's bad it's still hilarious. Sometimes though, *other* music creeps in. It's usually unexpected and it's usually way off my radar. DEATH HAS 1000 EARS (what a name, huh?) is both of those things. It's tuba (played with vigor by Mika) and banjo (Douglas of RAMSHACKLE GLORY) and it's music made for freaks. And sometimes that appeals to me. Sometimes.

I forget that Pittsburgh is in Appalachia. This record could partly be the soundtrack to Cormac McCarthy's *Suttree*. When the music is sparse, with just banjo and tuba and bass drum (with banjoist Douglas's caterwaul), it's at its best and most odd. There is a bit of accordion and some horns on a few tracks that is probably unnecessary and brings those songs more into a folk punk thing that doesn't appeal to me (a member of the Gang said he needed "1000 ears to just to hear all the other musicians"). Those people who miss Plan-It-X, HEX, or DARK DARK DARK will find something they like in DEATH HAS 1000 EARS (that's not any better). Listen and buy at deathhas1000ears.bandcamp.com.

NOT AN ENDNOTE:
Can you see the sunset from the Southside? Tell me all about it at AmericanBootGang@gmail.com. Next month? We'll see. As the RAMONES say, "See you, again."

Totally
Lame
with Neve Be

What You Love Shows On Your Earnest, If Sometimes Ugly, Face

Hey nerds, don't you just love it when you read a book that you love with such an obvious, throbbing boner love that your truest tastes are revealed to the world and yourself? When you are struck down by something you like this hard, it becomes glaringly clear what stuff you have just been pretending to like because you thought it was cool to other people. That happened to me with *Boy, Snow, Bird* by Helen Oyeyemi and if you are a sucker for neo-Gothic family dramas analyzing race and pickled in fairytale metaphor brine (you know who you are and if you have managed to stay afloat in the sometimes dreariness and unromanticness of many punk and hardcore scenes then you are as strong as me and I salute you with my black lace flag), I am going to tell you to stop reading this column this instant, quit your job, screen your calls, and get cozy with that woozy, poisonous bundle of live gems. If you are a biracial kid with a white mom that is like the bonus level of appreciating the beauty and terror of this book. Or maybe I just have extra-special weird mommy issues who knows? More below.

This kind of thing happens to me with music I listen to and art that I make too. It happens with how I spend my time or make my money. As in it occurs to me I love something I have been denying that I love, or that I don't like something I have been thinking I like because I liked the way my declaration of liking lies would light up the faces of anyone but me. Why the fuck should what I do with myself sound better to you than it does to me? You see, even as a Sagittarius born in the week of the Titan, I was not immune to the influence of trauma laid on my absorbent child skin. It manifests now as PTSD, or more specifically, chronic anxiety, panic attacks, codependency, and people-pleasing followed by fiery bursts of claims to my need for independence. The more I care about someone, the more I care what they think of me. The more I care what they think of me, the more I die every second I don't know how they are, what they're thinking, how this might affect my ability and desire to survive. If people play on this in any way, I can be at their mercy. Or become afraid that I am, and lance out to protect what I have built for myself. Sounds grim, right? Nah. Only if you aren't into that sort of thing. But I'm only describing it at its worst. It contrasts highly with the confident, ambitious, and amiable punk who writes and says and moves however and whatever and whenever they want.

I've been in / with / for Sins Invalid for five years now. And to be honest, even when I am most frustrated, it's the tits, and it's my family. Not that I'm trying to make you think of family and tits at the same time.

I first heard of them at the Allied Media Conference in 2010, where I was sort of zipping and sulking around like a manic-depressive bug creature, though I didn't even have antenna tattooed on my face yet. It was the second year of my independent hitchhiking and ridesharing adventures as a crusty wheelchair punk, and my self-analysis and self-identification as an intersectionally disabled person wasn't all there. I have told this story many times in many ways, because it is a part of my current iteration's origin story, but I realize now, that I don't usually tell the version with Sins Invalid in it. It was always another disabled anarchist who told me that I needed to get it together and start treating my body like it matters, like my queer black disabled body matters. I had been involved in other performance projects that included other disabled people, in which disability was not seen as a hindrance to dance and expression. But I had never fucking seen something like Sins Invalid, in which disability was the hardcore subject of and vehicle of expression. And disabled sexuality no less! What will they think of next?? Sins Invalid's Patty Berne and Leroy Moore were doing a workshop at the AMC, and I read the description a thousand times. And I didn't go. I don't remember why. Maybe, under the scabbed and dirt painted surface, I was scared. When I got back to Western Mass I looked them up, emailed them, and immediately asked, *What can I do for you*? I was imagining a glamorous secret disabled Hollywood or Broadway where disabled people were applauded in feathers, sequins, and pearls.

Feeling my heart kick into gear like that was like a flush starting at my ass and making its way to my throat. Turns out the day to day at Sins Central (Sins' office) is a lot more DIY punk than Hollywood glamor, but when I got there to intern summer 2011, it was a point of no return for me. A number of times I would decide, fuck this, I don't agree with this, I don't agree with that, these aren't an exact reflection of my politics or aesthetic, there's gotta be another disabled organization or performance group that pops with radical nuance and sex appeal. Spoiler alert, eager gnomes, there is not. It is now 2016 and I have gone from earnest intern to Sins Invalid core member, community educator, and performer. I'm performing in my first Sins Invalid show (most likely coming up in a couple days if you are a subscriber in the Bay so catch it October 14th–16th at ODC in San Francisco if you don't wait till November to read this issue!) this year and it both is and isn't everything I would hope it would be.

There is not a strict organizational or institutional structure that Sins Invalid resembles. We are not a company, and although we believe in collectivity, consensus and communalism, not everyone is in the same place, ableism often means excessive travel is not accessible, and not everyone has the ability or spoons at any given time to make certain kinds of calls. Co-founder and artistic director Patty Berne is without a doubt the captain of the ship, but the crew rapidly shifts, and despite her resemblance to a golden delicious deity, so does Patty's capacity. This year she experienced an incredible loss in the family, and her physical health and needs change week to week. Now that she needs to manage more attendants throughout her day, she sometimes is less available to manage us. What conversation was it that happened in my head this summer after I moved away from her and my Sins Invalid home? As the youngest performer, but also as someone who had been previously trusted as Patty's right-hand person in show planning, I am going to be hosting and writing a significant amount of the show, and I felt under a lot of pressure. When it came to Sins stuff, I felt angry and stressed every day this past month. When I didn't get feedback on my work, I imagined apathy, a lack of enthusiasm or trust in me. Many ableist exchanges happened in the course of trying to book and hold rehearsal space for those of us working in Seattle, and in my head I kept saying, "I quit I quit I quit."

Then yesterday, I got about six emails from Patty. They are all audio recordings giving me feedback on my work. She is telling me not to worry, that I am doing great on deadlines, that my work is strong. She tells me, what do you imagine? What are you wearing? How is the light? What are you holding in your hand? She says, I know we feel far away from each other, I know, but know, I am here, you are here, we are doing this. She says audio recordings are the most accessible way for her to give feedback and keep in touch right now, and she thanks all of us working in Seattle—Nomy, Leah, and me—for keeping video record of our rehearsals. She says I love you. When I hear her voice in my earbuds, leaning against brick as I rest from dancing, I cry five-year-old crocodile tears. I feel relieved and a little lousy. The other night in bed, Tony had reminded me that not feeling like someone I look up to likes me, likes what I do, has faith in me, is a big wound of mine, especially someone who might be a mother figure. Womp womp. It's so true I can't even protest.

I think of myself as a patient person, as someone who gives others a lot of room, and doesn't make assumptions about their intentions. But sometimes, I let my anxiety and my mommy issues get the better of me. Sometimes, access conflicts. In not wanting to be seen as a child struggling to create new and compelling artistic work in a challenging, long distance with the director framework, I was experiencing a lot of impish child anger. I want people to have faith in me, and sometimes I need to make up the difference I feel with a ferocity of faith. I think that this column is a really important place where I can choose not to save face. What's fun or punk about saving face? *Rip my face off.* I want punk to be a place where we are allowed to fall apart, where we are allowed to fuck up and say too much or too little and then accountably and ferociously process and bear hug it out. I don't think it's any coincidence that a lot of the performers and think tanks in Sins Invalid have been queer punks, and I'd love to know how they think punk and disability intersect and have mutually affected their glittering lives!

I have been thinking now about what Patty is asking about costume. For the first time ever, I didn't go the creature feature route of how I want to present. That's not even edgy anymore, Die Antwoord made it racist and boring. I embraced my earnest desire to be beautiful and told her I want to be wearing a gold gown. I want to look ready for the biggest stages of the world. I want to look famous. Contracted knees, cracked teeth and all. And I ain't ashamed that I want everybody to love me! In the most gritty, anti-capitalist, DIY sense of course. Today on video chat, Patty says she sees me in the crown of green leaves featured on the show poster, and dancing with Antoine, who I wanted to dance with so many years ago when we auditioned for Axis Dance Company together. You can check out our amazing, historic, hardcore and fabulous feat of lameness (and see what I end up wearing): Birthing, Dying, Becoming Crip Wisdom at ODC October 14th–16th. It will be a largely accessible experience. Get your tickets this way: tiny.cc/sins2016tix. Later a filmed version will be streamed online! In future, the next time I feel like having a tantrum, I'll just admit to the nearest human or reptile that I need a hug.

ENDNOTES:

1) Imogen: Get on with your bad self, damn, I don't believe in selling out either and I am so

proud of you!
2) Grace: You are both a nerd and hero, and a Table of Contents is one of the best things that has ever happened, I'm not sorry.
3) Agatha: You will be missed as a band but I know your members will keep smearing the walls of the world with their awesomeness. Your last ever show was the best and I felt like the only person in the room or like a very high Who in Whoville at a hardcore show which is basically how I always want to feel.
4) Prop 60: Fuck you, you don't know my life. *Vote no on Prop 60* if you are in California (which I am not anymore so please vote for me), if you vote (which Lefty basically says you should kinda even if you're an anarchist) and protect the privacy, safety, and livelihood of porn performers!

FELIX HAVOC
FIN DE SIECLE ANGST

I think one of the principal themes of the emergence of punk in the mid-'70s was simply boredom. Bismarck supposedly said, "Never underestimate the power of boredom to influence events." If you listen to the music you hear the BUZZCOCKS, the ADVERTS, the CLASH, X-RAY SPEX, and many more singing about boredom, boredom, boredom. Nowadays young people have more things to do on their phone then a whole generation did growing up in the mid '70s. Get in the way back machine and remember back then there were only three channels on TV. And a lot of people still didn't even have TV. I know we didn't get a TV until I was thirteen or fourteen. Landline telephones, print magazines, three channels. This was an era of mass media when only a handful of outlets controlled almost all entertainment and information. For young people growing up in that era, there wasn't a whole lot to do especially if you weren't into sports. Some kids built models and played Dungeons and Dragons. Some read comic books or science fiction, which was a big scene in those days. And many turned to music. Music and records were some of the principal avenues of escape and expression in the '70s, I would argue, more so than today.

Let's look at the demographic situation in Britain and America in the mid '70s. This was the era when deindustrialization was starting to get underway. However, what we now call the knowledge economy had really not yet gotten off of the ground. Today we place a very high value on creativity and there is a whole class of people called creatives. In the '70s this kind of creativity was not nearly as highly valued. Nowadays you can be creative and non-conformist and work in some kind of hip office writing software or apps or something and no one is going to care if you have a tattoo or your ear pierced. In the '70s, outside of fashion, music, and design, almost any form of nonconformist expression in the workplace just wasn't going to fly. And even in those businesses I don't think that creative people could get away with nearly as much self-expression or individuality as today.

As a result, there was a whole generation of young people with little or no future in either industry or creative business. I think this funneled a huge number of people into art schools without any real solid job prospects. If you read the memoir literature of '77 punk and the glam movement which preceded it, you find a huge number of what would become founding members of bands and what we would think of as the Intelligentsia of the '77 Punk scene from the art schools. While many of these were middle and upper-class kids, there were also working class kids whose parents wanted them to go to college but who has little or no interest in pursuing mainstream corporate careers. I feel like a lot of the people who populated the first wave of punk were just kind of killing time at art school. Today they probably would have been identified as being creative at a young age and would be designing web pages or something like that before they were even out of high school. I also feel like nowadays if you are a creative person who doesn't quite fit in you are going to experience somewhat less alienation and boredom as you would have in the '70s simply for the fact that there are many, many more outlets than there were back then.

I feel like one of the roles of the art schools is to take these talented and creative people and channel their creativity into something that is a marketable commodity. For a very few that means fine art, but for most it means something like advertising, design, or marketing. I feel that since the '77 punk scene had such a large art school contingent and the biggest scenes were in places like New York, LA, and London, there was a great deal of proximity to the "industry," as it was then known. People had friends and connections in the music business and many of those first wave of punk bands went directly to major labels or semi-independent labels who basically operated like smaller versions of the majors. A good example is the DICKIES—one of the guys in this band had an uncle who worked at A&M and they got a major label contract right out of the gate.

Ironically one of the groups that took punk at face value the most and interjected the DIY aesthetic which has lasted to this day was CRASS. All of them also came out of Art School.

One of the guys from the band RED MEAT once told me 1981 was to hardcore for what 1977 was to punk. Certainly hardcore had gotten rolling a few years earlier, with bands like MIDDLE CLASS and BAD BRAINS laying the groundwork. This scene really exploded in 1981, though. If we look back on the first wave of 1977, most of those bands quickly signed to major labels and assimilated into the music industry. In that regards the punk subculture started to punch some holes in the wall and let the light through. But it was the DIY hardcore scene of the early '80s that really broke through all the remaining barriers. To me this first wave of hardcore was in a way more revolutionary than the '77 punk movement because it pushed back against the music industry and established what we now call the DIY ethic. The intelligentsia of this era came less from the art schools and more just from bored alienated suburban kids. I would argue this generation was one or two steps further removed from the art schools, the music industry, and the establishment as we know it. Rather than challenging convention they strove to create entirely alternative structure and framework for hardcore punk to operate inside, somewhat from necessity and somewhat for ethical reasons. Although the turn towards college rock and crossover metal in the mid-to-late eighties severely undermined this framework, we know that, a die-hard group really pushed things further in the late '80s and early '90s, establishing a very solid underground DIY Network that bore very little resemblance to the landscape that the CLASH or GENERATION X navigated.

I am often surprised at how many hardcore "lifers" there are from the early '80s scene, still on the fringes of the movement. To the '77 art school crowd, it was the "suburban kids" who ruined their bohemian scene, a scene that came and went really fast, quickly commodified or abandoned. But the hardcore scene has now produced several generations of lifers. I think a lot of those hardcore lifers were ones who lacked the art school training to fall back on. The ones who just didn't fit into the landscape of the early '80s cultural and economic landscape. I'd argue that the high quality and profusion of punk and early hardcore were at least partially the result of a one time demographic and cultural convergence. This will probably not be repeated. There maybe be another golden age of hardcore ahead of us, but its causes and form will be much different from that which preceded it.

VIKTOR
VARGYAI
AWKWARD
RAGING

Intense upbeat: I'm sort of happy. Although TELEVISION PERSONALITIES' "Painted Word" is squeezing my heart. It's more powerful since Dan Treacy cannot sing yet he still does, to this bluntly heavy and accidently guarded music, here's your fucking world: Painted.

Spending a Sunday morning in this environment while munching a burnt broccoli sandwich is almost a status where it is spoiled to report on the punk existence to a punk magazine.

I bought that TELEVISION PERSONALITIES LP in Barcelona and after buying English records in Catalunya I officially kicked myself out of punk.

I did not yet join the Nazis, take a programming class to move to SF and powerboost gentrification as tech bro, or start taking the corporate scum seriously but I did skip the opportunity to watch ULTRA perform on the streets of the Gràcia neighborhood in order to eat a whole roasted cauliflower head in some high ranked tapas bar.

A strange side note: I'm not even sure if ULTRA played because I only saw a flyer for the show—no social media event and no after show videos, which in 2016 is pretty weird. Although, this mystery does not tame my ambivalent feelings.

Do I regret it? Did I make the wrong choice? I don't know. I can't tell since that dinner was the most delicious meal I have ever eaten—agnolotti filled with caramelized onions and goat cheese, in a mushroom-thyme butter sauce, stacked with parmesan. Even if I have since flushed it down, that popping feeling when the flavors burst on my tongue, spreading all over my mouth, reaching both ways up to tingling my brain and down to make warm that part of my chest that is often heavy, making me melt down from my bar stool is still with me. Yes, I really like to eat well and I have already written in Hungarian that food is the new rock'n'roll. But rock'n'roll is still rock'n'roll as well and even today I have experienced the same satisfaction from records as that agnolotti gave me.

There are turning points when realizing whatever I consume now is by far the best. It's not an erasing process, no bridges are burnt but a rise of a natural hierarchy in the correlation of amazing things. Beyond my curiosity is always the hunger to find pure perfection. Let it be music or food (or some other things—books).

What matters is the memory. Which would have made me feel better or which would have made me learn more about me, about existence?

Food is not art; we should believe Jonathan Meads on that. Still it gives the same sort of embrace of pleasure in our inner universe. (I used to go to restaurants alone, I barely went to any shows alone.) The tongue is only a few centimeters (Americans: now *you* do the exchange) lower than the ears are from the brain. If they were above the hearing organs would we just eat ourselves obese and listen to each other's genitals?

So from now on do I have to always think about the relationship between the food I eat and how good the band ULTRA is? If I eat anything better than that agnolotti then what was the point of skipping ULTRA? If I see a band better than ULTRA what should I eat?

But how good is ULTRA?

Their record is drenched in rage, resulting in viciously executed hardcore songs at a robust pace. Their context is already heavy. I was a bit let down by the actual songwriting but that's merely due to people saying they were a noisy and chaotic hardcore band. I expected collapsed songs and bubbling chaos at level ten, nightmarish visions channeled through mutant riffs. ULTRA is not like that.

The recording sounds too clear and carefully tuned for my taste and the linear riffs are mostly saved by minor gimmicks. All the ornamentation of the guitar is placed with great taste and creativity but I cannot trace the sense of randomness that happens due to urgency, confusion and luck. Which means that ULTRA have figured out what they want and they are doing it exactly as they wished to. This is the biggest difference between them and their suggested influences from the New York hardcore scene where the "H" and "C" started to become capitalized. I don't intend to categorize them into jock-core (at least sonically—since I do not know them) since they are obviously in opposition to that but they have found a path that is not frequently visited by my listening, although it is very good. They would have fit into the Lengua Armada Discos catalogue too.

Would they be better if I have seen them live? Most likely since live, such bands do tend to peel down the layers that are hidden by studio recordings and shape into a rawer form. Unfortunately I cannot decide whether skipping that dinner would have been worth this experience but since I cannot download a meal but can download a record maybe it was a rational choice.

The difference between the two experiences would have been opposite. Seeing ULTRA play live would have made their recordings better while eating amazing food always makes it a little bit less great to eat average food.

While I despise reviews where a band's live performance testifies against their mediocre record, I also cheat myself into liking bands for such sentimental reasons. Who am I to fight associations? Since this is a column and not the review section I will tyrannically use my privilege to discuss bands whose preference is based on my own mind's associations. GENOCIDE ASSOCIATION. How can a *Sonik Lobotomy* be this enjoyable? I do hear many melodic parts which are very weird, but the absence of blast beats and neck-break speed. The main focus here is on radically lo-fi recording and super noisy songwriting, supposedly rooted in some boredom-triggered indolent bravery. In their case I would not care how these songs sounded in a studio with practiced to perfection sessions. Why should I care when this is more delectable? Why should I have to judge a soup calculating in the possibility of someone spitting into it? All hail bad recording.

One of my favorite contemporary weirdo bands EXHAUSTION released a new collaboration record with a Dutch tenor saxophone player—it's alright because I like it—Kris Wanders and it is the sort of European free jazz chaos that for me is really close to entertaining noise, since I listen to Brötzmann like I would "In a Car." While it too me a long time to appreciate tunes like EXHAUSTION's, I have made the work which is largely based on my childhood when my father excessively disciplined my vulnerable self to sit down and listen to fucked up experimental free form music that scared the hell out of me and made my mom worry for my upbringing. I suppose now I have to be thankful to this man for inviting me onto this exciting journey where confusion, discomfort and fear are things we should laugh at, observe, think about, and enjoy. Though, I do hope this is only a sidetrack in EXHAUSTION's discography and that they will continue making timelessly visceral monumental records about inner space.

Another memory that recently popped into my head was when few years ago on a weekday I was smoking weed at home alone and listening to American hardcore with a laptop on my chest while eating pizza and finding this culture—culture is what is done to us—of angry youth with all its easily solvable mystery very entertaining. From SEX VID through LIFE'S BLOOD and I have gone as far as OUTBURST and BREAKDOWN. But I cannot say that the later would be enjoyable without the previous and can't say vice versa.

Mistakes I made in Barcelona: I was too late to notice the SHIT SA reissue in a record store. It only got my attention when I had already paid my bill. Coming home I listened to them and now I know everything about my mistake. Their sound: manic proto-punk-strange riffs-rock'n'roll repetitive chanting craze with sort of hardcore compression reminding me of ELECTRIC EELS on more speed or both sides of the HITLER SS / TAMPAX split played at once. Punk music is not only great when it sounds like it's being chased but also when it's rushing after some weird obsession. SHIT SA sounds haunted by their weird ideas which always leads to a freaky guitar part and the catatonic screaming of the singer. It is great and reminds me why I tend to listen to more early bands than contemporary ones. First because there are always more things that happened in the past than are happening now. Second because those bands were way more inventive and brave than most of the bands today. But it is such a bullshit excuse that everything now is figured out. It's always going to be a more interesting story of finding Vitamin C then taking it daily but I like to believe that these bands are unique because they are presenting themselves. As ULTRA is unique by being conscious anarchists and ANXIETY is being artsy as MYSTIC INANE is outerworldly and SANG or PIÑÉN. Shit, just realized how important La Vida Es Un Mus is.

BLOWBLOOD
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It was the middle of the night and I woke to the van slowing down and pulling over on the side of the freeway. We were somewhere between Phoenix and Austin but I had no idea, in those hundreds of miles separating the cities, how far we were from anywhere. It was pitch black and we piled out, spreading out as we dragging our legs through the grass in the empty field or standing out on the road in front of the van, all with heads tilted back and looking up at the stars. We were driving to Austin, the next show on our tour, but there was said to be a meteor shower that night. We were so far from anything that the Milky Way tore through the night sky and you could see thousands of stars; it seemed so surreal, like a backdrop you could reach out and grab and pull down. Out of this world.

I looked up at the stars. It reminded me of when I was a kid and used to stay at my grandparents' beach house in Australia during my school summer holidays. I would spend the month lying on the sand every night, tracking the satellites slowly making their way across the sky and listening to the waves quietly creep up along the sand. It's a long time since then, it's been a long time since I'd looked at the stars like this. And thinking back on the tour now, it'll probably be one of the few things I remember from those three weeks on the road because of how alone and insignificant we all felt together looking up at something so beautiful when we're so used to looking down to hide from the world while we live our punk lives. We spent a lot of time in the van, on the road. We all work a lot and I don't live in Cleveland so we tried to make the most of the tour; booking a show every night and taking a night off only when the drive was too long between cities. This was one of those two nights in those twenty-three days. It felt good to be heading back to the East Coast, back to familiar territory and our friends along the rustbelt and some of the southern states close by.

Being in the van had been a mental battle most of the time for me. I stress too much. Well, you can only try your best, right? Sometimes your mind gets the better of you. Through the long drives and the heat and not having a phone in the USA I lost it a little at certain times. I knew I should be have been savoring these good times on the road before I had to go back to reality, back to work. Most of the times I was fine. On this long drive to Austin I cracked though, rocking back and forth and crying quietly in the darkness on the dirty floor of this metal box I couldn't escape, hurtling down the freeway and through the desert going 80 miles an hour. At some point I wore myself out enough to fall asleep.

You don't get alone time on tour. You don't get space. In a way I didn't want it anyway. I was hanging out with some of my best friends. We didn't fight. We were accommodating to each other's needs and personal problems. We got through the hard times together and we ended the tour closer to each other than when we'd started. We had hit the ground running, and so it took me a week in to realize how comfortable I was around these people, that realistically I'd only really known just over a year and had hardly got to see for more than half that time once I moved to Canada.

We left Cleveland late with some van problems, but soon were on our way to Chicago and our first show out of Cleveland, the band's hometown which we'd played the night before. That day I'd arrived from Toronto on the Greyhound, frazzled as fuck from the last few months (that's another boring life story) but as ready as I could be—did it even matter? St. Louis was after Chicago, and Martin from Lumpy, who I knew from years ago when we were both writing fanzines, set up the show for us. It was hot as hell and I got eaten alive by mosquitoes as soon as we arrived. Three out of four bands played before it got shut down by the cops. Biff from Feral Kid Records was driving us and someone at the show stole some items out of his distro. You think you're safe in your scene and you want to believe you can trust those in the community but people are still people and I had a bad feeling leaving the table alone—for his sake I wished I was wrong. We went back to Martin's house and talked punk. He knew Biff and I best and handed us both a personal mixtape he had made that night when we went to bed, before parting ways the next day. One side had CCTV, CONEHEADS and some other related bands. On the flip side was all D. LEOPARDO INDUSTRIAL MUSIC CO I'd never heard it before but we listened to the tape a few times on the rest of the tour and then the DLIMC side a few more times on our last drive back to Cleveland. It would be my bittersweet soundtrack to a tour I didn't want to end, to the goodbyes to my band I didn't want to say again.

We travelled west after St. Louis, through Kansas City and Denver. Harsh reality kicked in when we got paid a measly $60 in Salt Lake City from a greedy venue owner and a kid putting on the show who didn't know any better. The show had been so much fun and I had been riding high seconds before; then I felt like broken glass. I panicked when I realized we weren't going to come close to breaking even on this tour. I had taken on the financial burden so my friends didn't have to worry about it, but it just meant I freaked out a lot more and they had to deal with that instead. I'd forgotten that as ruthless of a city as Cleveland can be, the people that put on punk shows treat the touring bands way better than most other cities. My bubble had been burst and we had a string of similar poorly paid shows follow us right up until the last few days of the tour with a few exceptions in between. In hindsight, it didn't even matter that much compared to the amazing people we met or that helped us out in each city. Old friends we reunited with and new ones that were happy to give us a hand in the smallest of ways that made the biggest difference. We always had a place to stay, someone to eat with or talk punk and life with over a drink. I could go through and talk about the individual cities but I assume it would be laborious for you to hear, plus it's a personal experience I'd rather savor with the people that were there.

We were in our last week of tour. Our van broke down heading out to Baltimore from

Richmond. It was a shitty situation but in ways it brought us together even more so as we worked collectively to find a way to get to the show that night. It was hot as hell but the rain hit us and was so heavy that rivers were running down the hilly city when we arrived—late but just in time to play. We'd missed three bands, and our good friends in QUITTER were on last after us. I had been looking forward to watching them again for months, but I felt pathetic standing up the back of the space, too exhausted after our set to push through a sea of bodies radiating humidity. I stood out in the rain, sweating. I fell asleep in the van, soaked. We had to get back to Richmond that night and were sad we couldn't hang out longer but knew that realistically, if the van was going to break down anywhere, Richmond was the best place it could have happened. Shout outs to Sam from Feel It and Mark from Beach Impediment for your help and hospitality (obviously amongst the many other people I should be giving props to over the tour, but I hope you know who you are).

Biff's van was back in action but it was late in the day when we were able to get on the road and again, we missed the supports and arrived just in time to play in Philly. Like the last few days playing in the south, I finished the set pouring sweat and barely able to breathe through the humidity. Jo's guitar strings broke for probably the tenth time on tour and his amp had died a day or two before. But we got Lucky's Chinese food that night and Dottie's Donuts in the morning and life seemed pretty swell. I constantly joked that the tour was more about food than shows, but we were on the road so much that we rarely got to enjoy any unique vegan places along the way anyway, instead making quick pit stops at Taco Bell (Taco John, El Taco, etc.) so we could make it to the next city and show that day. We were reaching the end and putting in everything we had to make it there without compromising our set. Skull Fest in Pittsburgh was next and would be our last show. There were going to be a bunch of Cleveland people there and we were all looking forward to seeing them and the Pittsburgh family too. It was the home stretch. I guess the last few days are more emotional to me in hindsight than when it was happening, and so I don't have much to say just yet. I'm not ready to go back there, to remembering the feeling of it all inevitably coming to an end.

Going back to Toronto and leaving Cleveland wasn't as hard as it was the first time or second time I had to do it. I don't cry anymore when I leave my friends behind. But I can't tell if it's because I know I'll see them again sooner or later, or if it's because there's only so many times you can cry before you harden yourself to accept the inevitable, even if it still sucks just as much. I'm sure you know the feeling. Or maybe you don't. I'm almost 27. Sometime in your twenties you hit a point when you realize this is your life, and when you were younger you thought things would get better sometime but as you get older reality hits that this is the hand you were dealt and you gotta make the most of it and deal with it, and even if life changed for the better, you are still going to be the same messed up bitter arsehole anyway. Being separated from the ones I love seems like a permanent jail sentence but I know it's not the case. Who knows what will end up happening.

Did this turn into a love letter to my band mates? What I meant to say was, tour was fun. Thanks to everyone that came to a show and gave us a helping hand. DLIMC's November cassingle set the tone of this column for me, so give it a listen while you read this.

CONTRIBUTE TO MRR

In addition to scene reports, guest columns, and interviews, we're looking for a few specific contributions:

We want some new columnists to write about Hardcore with a capital H, DIY metal, and garage rock, as well as regular columnists from South and Central America, the UK, and Southeast Asia. For consideration, send a sample column and a list of three topics you'd cover in future columns.

FILM AND PHOTO ISSUE

We're accepting submissions for our next special issue. Photographers, send five of your best images for consideration. Filmmakers, let us know what you're working on! We'll get in touch with the best submissions in order to develop features.

ABORTION ON DEMAND WITHOUT APOLOGY

Have you been involved in organizing around abortion-related legislation where you live? Do you have an abortion story (positive or negative!) that you'd like to share? Do you want to be a part of normalizing conversations around access to reproductive rights? We're planning a special feature. Contact us if you'd like to contribute.

SEX WORK IS REAL WORK

We're collecting perspectives from sex workers around the world for an on-going series of guest columns, 1000–2000 words in length. Discretion guaranteed.

MRR@MAXIMUMROCKNROLL.COM

PUNK ARCHIVING:

A Conversation with Ian MacKaye & Nichole Procopenko

THREAT
THREAT
SNEAKERS
I WON'T LOVE
DISCHORD
REGGAE / ON-U
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REGGAE ROOTS + BLUES
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The Teen Idles drank a lot of coke. I know because Ian MacKaye showed me the notebook that they used to keep track of their band fund—"$20 for gas. $5 for cokes. H.R. borrowed $20. $5 for cokes. Henry borrowed $30..." He still has it, and Henry's I.O.U. (since paid back) is still in the same cigar box that they used to hold money on tour.

The Dischord House in Arlington, VA is full of objects that tell the story of the early days of punk in the United States—binders full of flyers and photos, boxes of zines, filing cabinets and flat files packed with of extra inserts and original art, shelves lined with demos and mixtapes, copies of every Dischord release (*Filler* red, yellow, blue, and green tacked up on the wall). Most remarkable though are not the collectibles. Ian has nearly every piece of mail he ever received, and held together the correspondence is a stunning illustration of the far-reaching DIY punk network that was built in the early '80s and has been sustained ever since. I spent a late summer afternoon with Ian and archivist Nichole Procopenko, discussing the challenges and merits of building punk archives in the only way we know how—DIY.

Interview and introduction by Grace Ambrose. Photos by Farrah Skeiky.

NECROS
MINOR THREAT
MINOR THREAT
In My Eyes
THANKS
SOUL SIDE

MRR: We're spending a lot of time at the magazine figuring out ways to create archival practices, standards, and schemas that work for us in the context of an institution that is punk, functioning, and still active. They aren't always what is considered best practice across the industry. Nichole, I imagine that what you do here at Dischord is a little bit different than what you do at the Smithsonian.

Nichole: The work that I do with Folklife is very heavily dictated by archival standards—this is how you do it and this is what you do. Here, the way that we work together is really interesting. I've been working in archives since 2010, so for six years, and almost every other collection that I've worked with—personal papers, letters, record labels—has been for either an entity that no longer exists or for people who are dead. And so sitting here working with Ian is incredible because—

Ian: I'm not dead.

Nichole: We've mainly gone through his thirty-five years of correspondence, which is a massive amount of paper. He had saved it all and we would sit down, here at the table, Ian would pull out a stack of letters and say, "This is this, this is from Tim Yohannan, this is from a Minor Threat promoter from Reno," and I would try and capture everything the way that it came out of Ian's mouth as opposed to looking at something and trying to figure it out.

MRR: Do you miss some of the archival distance? They always say you should never index your own book. With archives, when you get a person's papers, you keep them in the order that they were in when they passed, with the idea that their organization (even if it seems like a lack thereof) can tell you something.

Ian: I remember saying to Nichole, "What about acquisitional order?" And she said, "It's your order! You're making it." The thing about acquisitional order is that the boxes come in and you say, well this is the way it was intended." Well yeah, I'm fucking intending it right now.

I had boxes upstairs filled with thousands of letters, with no order to speak of. What happened was once I'd answered a letter, I would check it off and throw the letter in a box under my desk. When that box got full, I'd take it upstairs and dump it in a bigger box. There was no real order. So when we were taking stuff out, there was a discussion about whether we should keep them in the order that they came out. But it was a random order that they went in!

Nichole. Now we have it divided in four series: Minor Threat, Fugazi, Ian's personal letters—which is the biggest one—and Dischord mail. The first thing you do is figure out [which of those categories] it fits into. Then what is it, who is it from. Is it from a promoter, is it from Ian's friend, is it from a Dischord artist?

Ian: Is it from Ian's enemy?

Nichole: Ian's enemy, Ian's stalker. The really great thing is that Ian is able and willing to sit down with everything. He has identified every single piece of mail—and there are thousands of pieces of mail.

Ian: I have pretty good recall. I had a friend by earlier, and she asked "Do you remember every one?" I remember almost everything, but strangely the only one I didn't remember was a series of letters from a woman who I clearly had a relationship with, in the early '80s. It wasn't like romantic, but it was seriously—

Nichole: You had a friendship.

Ian: Yeah, like "I have been thinking about you a lot, too. And here's what's going on, and give me a call some time."

It's weird, I can almost recognize her handwriting but I cannot place her. It's the only one. Other people I remember—that's so and so or that's such and such, or that guy killed himself. To me, I find it all super important but I don't think it's necessarily important for the world. It's fun for me, or interesting for me, to be able to sit down [with the letters] but if I have to explain to Nichole what each letter is, it makes me engage with what's going on there. We read through almost all of them.
Nichole: A glance over.
Ian: It'd be pretty quick. You know, "Mail order." Or "Oh, this is a fan letter." And every once in a while I'd see one and be like "Oh, you'll like this one." 'Cause I have dramatic readings.
Nichole: The dramatic readings are the best.
Ian: The dramatic readings are good. There's some where guys are mad at me, especially. "God damn, go to hell! Why didn't you play that song?"

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MRR: Do you have any of your outgoing correspondence?
Nichole: Some returned letters, or rough drafts that Ian wrote.
Ian: That was an era when I did not run carbon paper. My mom actually kept copies of many of her outgoing letters. One thing about my letter writing, especially in the '90s: I was typically months and months behind because I was touring so much. I'm still like that; I have 1700 emails to answer. Perpetual, it drives me crazy. So I'm a year behind. In some ways it's absurd, and in some ways, I'm just going to get to them. I'll answer them, it'll just take me a year. I just wrote to someone the other day. "I know it took me a year but here's the information you were looking for…" But, because of that, people would move so the letters would come back.

At some point in the late '80s, I relegated my letter writing to postcards. As a result, I wasn't able to write all that much and it forced me to keep things simple. Especially at that point, people's relationship with me was getting more complicated. and I didn't want to engage with them on a really deep level. Someone would write me like a six page letter—
Nichole: Even longer than that, some of them are...
Ian: Insane, just like, "I think I'm Lucifer, you're the only person who can help me" and I'd write back, "Thank you for your letter. Just for the record, I don't think you're Lucifer. Take a walk."

MRR: There's a Derrida essay about postcards where he talk about the idea that anyone can read them. "In open letters a secret appears." You can't get too intimate.
Ian: And that's the second part of my postcard concept. Very clearly thought out. Keeping it short, keeping it not intimate, so they didn't feel like we were getting into something, but also, I felt like for a lot of parents, getting a letter, they could see clearly, "Thanks for your letter blah blah blah." Occasionally, I would get a letter from a kid saying like, "I really don't wanna go to college, my parents are screaming at me." I'd have to write about it but I didn't want to put that on a postcard, so I'd write a letter in an envelope.

I was really pretty disciplined about postcards. I still am, I just write on postcards.
Nichole: It's important to know that Ian wrote back to 99% of the letters that he got.
Ian: It's a lot of writing.

Drawer 3
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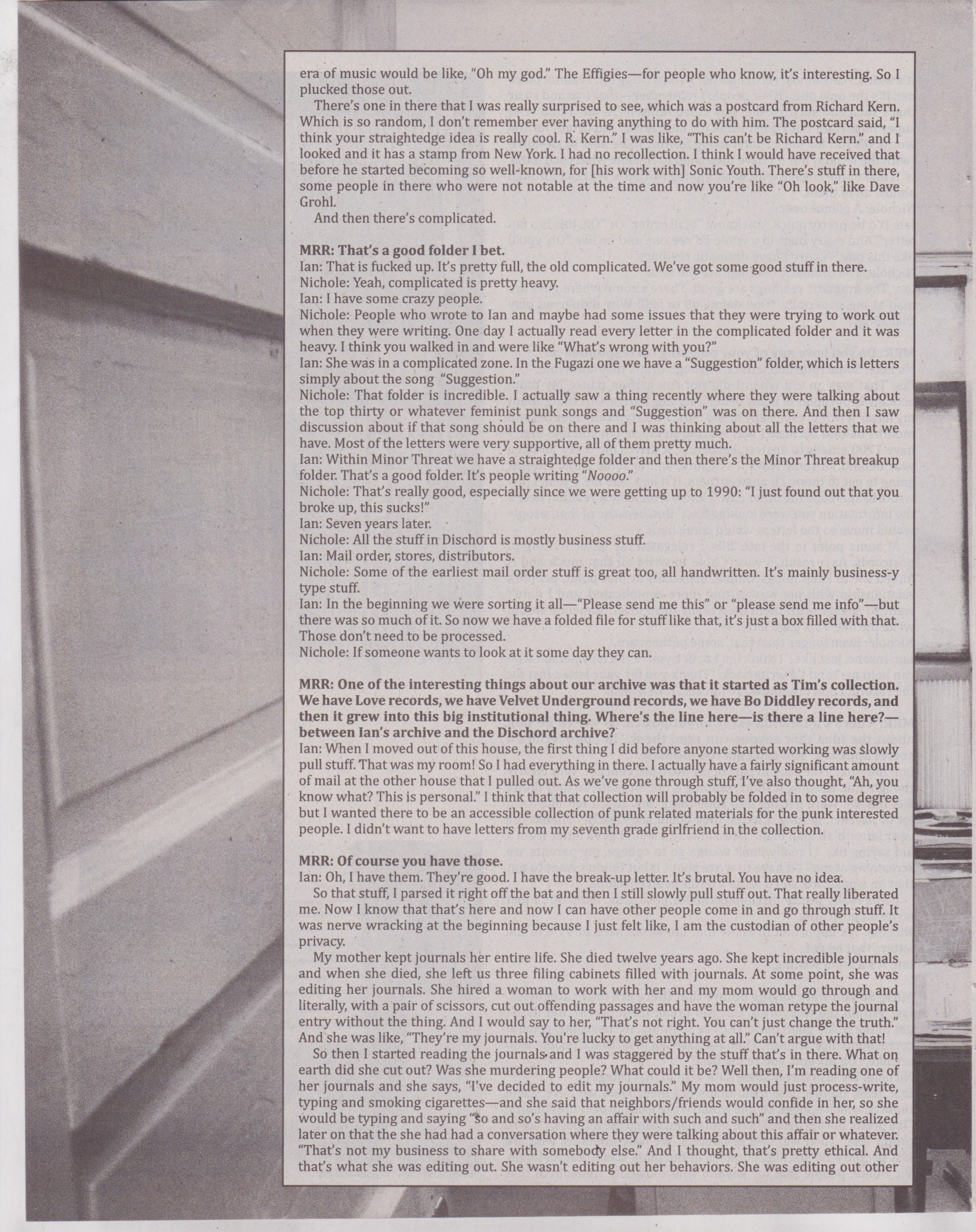
MRR: So you were saying before that there are four categories.
Ian: Within the categories, can you break them down? You didn't get to the really good ones. They're so funny. We have like, general correspondence, friends. Then we have fan mail, that's people who are like, "Oh my god, you're the best."
Nichole: We also threw some hate mail in that category.
Ian: Yeah, there's hate mail, that's fan mail. Then we have scene reports, which is killer. People would write from all over the country, "It's pretty boring here. There's this band called the Zippers, they're pretty fast." Then we have promoters. We have notables, who are just people who are like, notables in the punk scene. Keith Morris, Vic Bondi, people that for anyone who's actually students of that



era of music would be like, "Oh my god." The Effigies—for people who know, it's interesting. So I plucked those out.

There's one in there that I was really surprised to see, which was a postcard from Richard Kern. Which is so random, I don't remember ever having anything to do with him. The postcard said, "I think your straightedge idea is really cool. R. Kern." I was like, "This can't be Richard Kern." and I looked and it has a stamp from New York. I had no recollection. I think I would have received that before he started becoming so well-known, for [his work with] Sonic Youth. There's stuff in there, some people in there who were not notable at the time and now you're like "Oh look," like Dave Grohl.

And then there's complicated.

MRR: That's a good folder I bet.

Ian: That is fucked up. It's pretty full, the old complicated. We've got some good stuff in there.

Nichole: Yeah, complicated is pretty heavy.

Ian: I have some crazy people.

Nichole: People who wrote to Ian and maybe had some issues that they were trying to work out when they were writing. One day I actually read every letter in the complicated folder and it was heavy. I think you walked in and were like "What's wrong with you?"

Ian: She was in a complicated zone. In the Fugazi one we have a "Suggestion" folder, which is letters simply about the song "Suggestion."

Nichole: That folder is incredible. I actually saw a thing recently where they were talking about the top thirty or whatever feminist punk songs and "Suggestion" was on there. And then I saw discussion about if that song should be on there and I was thinking about all the letters that we have. Most of the letters were very supportive, all of them pretty much.

Ian: Within Minor Threat we have a straightedge folder and then there's the Minor Threat breakup folder. That's a good folder. It's people writing "*Noooo*."

Nichole: That's really good, especially since we were getting up to 1990: "I just found out that you broke up, this sucks!"

Ian: Seven years later.

Nichole: All the stuff in Dischord is mostly business stuff.

Ian: Mail order, stores, distributors.

Nichole: Some of the earliest mail order stuff is great too, all handwritten. It's mainly business-y type stuff.

Ian: In the beginning we were sorting it all—"Please send me this" or "please send me info"—but there was so much of it. So now we have a folded file for stuff like that, it's just a box filled with that. Those don't need to be processed.

Nichole: If someone wants to look at it some day they can.

MRR: One of the interesting things about our archive was that it started as Tim's collection. We have Love records, we have Velvet Underground records, we have Bo Diddley records, and then it grew into this big institutional thing. Where's the line here—is there a line here?—between Ian's archive and the Dischord archive?

Ian: When I moved out of this house, the first thing I did before anyone started working was slowly pull stuff. That was my room! So I had everything in there. I actually have a fairly significant amount of mail at the other house that I pulled out. As we've gone through stuff, I've also thought, "Ah, you know what? This is personal." I think that that collection will probably be folded in to some degree but I wanted there to be an accessible collection of punk related materials for the punk interested people. I didn't want to have letters from my seventh grade girlfriend in the collection.

MRR: Of course you have those.

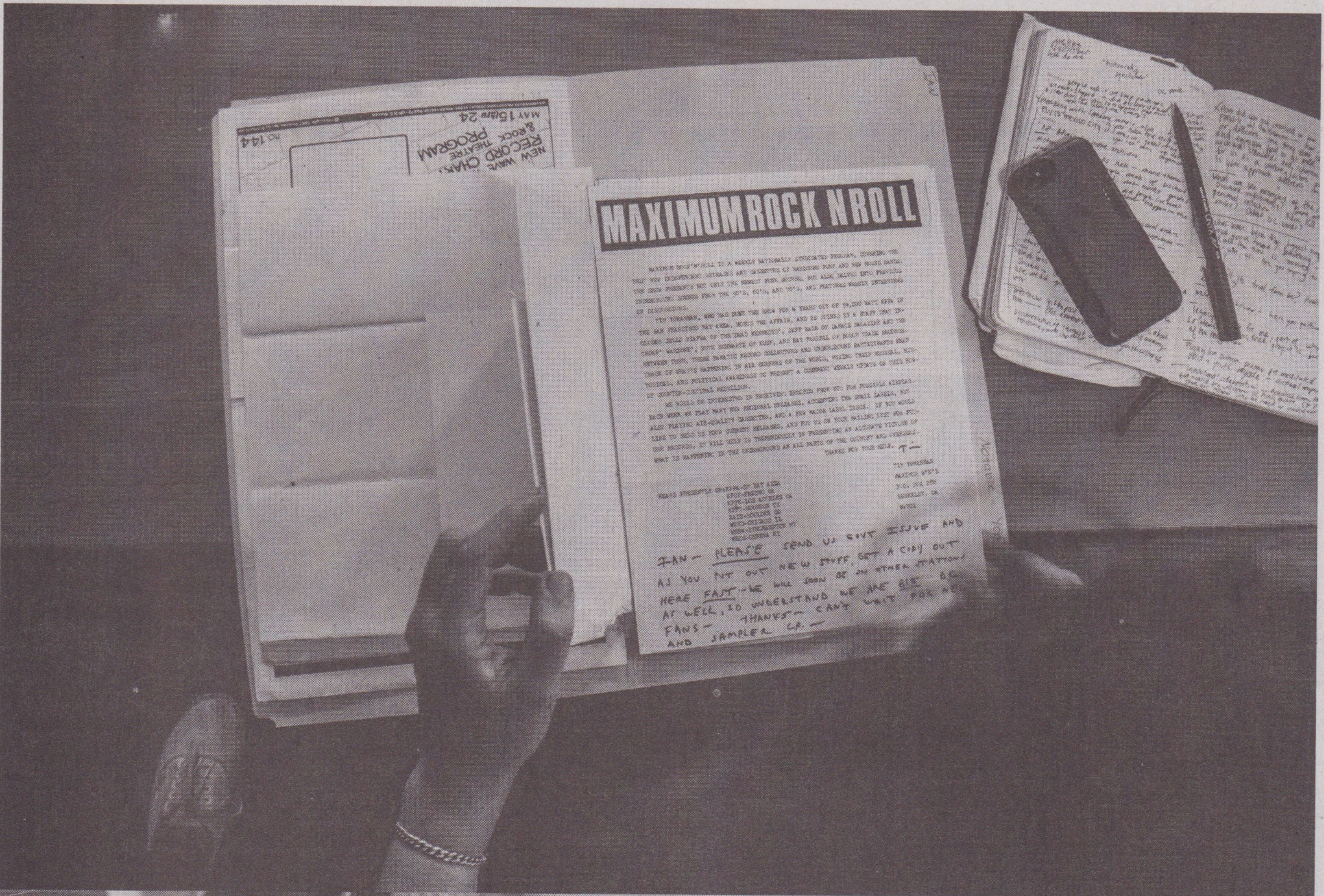
Ian: Oh, I have them. They're good. I have the break-up letter. It's brutal. You have no idea.

So that stuff, I parsed it right off the bat and then I still slowly pull stuff out. That really liberated me. Now I know that that's here and now I can have other people come in and go through stuff. It was nerve wracking at the beginning because I just felt like, I am the custodian of other people's privacy.

My mother kept journals her entire life. She died twelve years ago. She kept incredible journals and when she died, she left us three filing cabinets filled with journals. At some point, she was editing her journals. She hired a woman to work with her and my mom would go through and literally, with a pair of scissors, cut out offending passages and have the woman retype the journal entry without the thing. And I would say to her, "That's not right. You can't just change the truth." And she was like, "They're my journals. You're lucky to get anything at all." Can't argue with that!

So then I started reading the journals and I was staggered by the stuff that's in there. What on earth did she cut out? Was she murdering people? What could it be? Well then, I'm reading one of her journals and she says, "I've decided to edit my journals." My mom would just process-write, typing and smoking cigarettes—and she said that neighbors/friends would confide in her, so she would be typing and saying "so and so's having an affair with such and such" and then she realized later on that the she had had a conversation where they were talking about this affair or whatever. "That's not my business to share with somebody else." And I thought, that's pretty ethical. And that's what she was editing out. She wasn't editing out her behaviors. She was editing out other

MINOR THREAT 3
MINOR THREAT 2
MINOR THREAT 1
TEEN IDLES
DC BANDS 1
DC BANDS 2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people's private life, their confidences. Ironically, I found some of her raw journals. She also did carbon copies. I found the originals, but she can't say anything now. So in the same way, I feel like I do have a responsibility to be cautious about this. We have a red folder. People have confided in me stuff that's really—on one hand they are central punk people, but they have confided *very* personal things and I don't think that should be for anyone to look at it. So that's in a red folder for now.

Nichole: A lot of times the first question that we get is "Are you going to digitize this stuff and put it online?" Most of the people are still alive.

MRR: So, *are you* going to digitize this stuff? What is the ultimate goal? Is there one?

Ian: This interview is the goal right now. For real. Obviously, it would be great if Nichole could actually be employed. She can help here and I can help her a little bit but it's not really, it's a pittance. That would be nice, but it's complicated because, it's no surprise, it's very hard for me to become "official." and I think in some ways this sort of very unorthodox approach is very much part of the story. It's like the house. People come here and say, "This is ridiculous that you have this stuff in this house." But it's like, the house is part of the collection.

MRR: I understand you completely. The way that it is and that it has been in this house, where people live and have lived, that's part of it.

Nichole: Professionally, what should happen is that all of those papers and master tapes should come out of the house and go somewhere that is climate and humidity controlled. However, being someone who like, punk changed my life, I understand where Ian is coming from. Let's work with it. Let's work with what we have here. What's the best way we can do it with what we have?

MRR: I work at SFMOMA, and I have always worked in museums, but I would never make a museum exhibition about punk. I think some people see that as a disinterest in cultural mobility, but really it's an interest in creating different, sustainable structures within an already existing *punk* culture.

Nichole: Somehow in the last few years, archiving has become trendy which is super weird to me. It's a really tedious job. The actual physical work is not that exciting. Somehow everyone is making an archive, and specifically punk archives have become trendy. Like, there's Fales Riot Grrrl, L.A. is making one, San Francisco is making one, and it's great but then sometimes...

Ian: It's not punk a lot of the time.

Nichole: When I went to see the *MRR* collection, it was amazing. I was like, yes, you are doing it, you're documenting yourselves and it's within your own community. This is fucking awesome. Ethically, I've been thinking a lot about all these materials that are going into these institutions, particularly universities. On one side, it's great; they have the money and the resources to take care of it so maybe it will be there in 200 years for someone to look at. But then also I feel like it takes something away from the materials, away from the collections.

MRR: I read something recently where V. Vale said that he thinks it's important to document counterculture but that he realizes that it's "being done by the enemy."

Ian: I don't actually understand what that means

MRR: I think he means institutions, like universities and museums and galleries.

Ian: Why are they the enemy?

MRR: Because they take things out of their context, they want to instrumentalize a culture that people have built in a way that serves their own purposes. Perhaps he views them as the normative culture that punk is pushing back against.

Ian: I think what they're archiving, however, is not the community or the culture, what they're archiving is the ephemera. It's like you think about anthropologists digging into a field where at some point some indigenous people lived. They can't find the people necessarily, they can't find the nature or the spirit; they find a shard of pottery. I guess I don't see that as compromising. I think that's actually beneficial, because otherwise it's just lost to the wind, to the soil, whatever. For some people I think those shards are inspirational in terms of their own lives, and knowing that societies thrived that have long since disappeared. In some ways the fact that they did exist is a signal that another society can exist. I think I understand Vale's point, but I don't know if I agree. If he's talking about rock venues or rock museums, commercial ventures, I get that. I understand but I don't think universities are the same exact thing.

I know somebody who actually tries to place punk and other radical culture materials or archives into the libraries of these schools. His concept is a very interesting one—that by feeding the library with radical culture collections, it becomes a magnet for people who are interested in that milieu. Like, if you have a library filled with sports ephemera, then you'll get a lot of sportos going to your college. His idea is you put in radical collections and they draw people who are interested in radical culture, which could theoretically slowly but significantly change the culture of the university and move it away from career training back to education. I think it's an interesting idea. I think it's certainly an interesting idea. Having said all that...I still don't know what the enemy means.

MRR: Well, if universities are collecting ephemera, the evidence of the past for the people of the future, how is what you are doing and what we're doing at *MRR* different? We're dealing with objects, but are we able to get at the people, the culture, in a different way?

Ian: The part of the university thing that I'm not comfortable with is that it becomes an academic wall for someone like me, who never went to college. I'm just not an academic minded person, so it never occurred to me that universities have libraries, honestly. A few years ago, I was invited to go to the George Washington University Library. I have a friend who works there, working on collections of different archives of underground culture and music culture in D.C., which is cool. I had never known that the library existed and had never set foot in there before that day. I had to show my ID to get through, I had to be on a guest list. That's not encouraging to me. But conversely, I have read plenty of books that have credited various universities for their materials.

I think in terms of the work we're doing here and what you're working on, there is a contextual understanding. So universities, they're pushing a dry collection. I'm thinking it's in the spirit...I guess it's the spirit of punk. You know, the underground had a profound impact on me and my life so as I work on this I think I'm drawing upon the same aesthetics and the same thinking about how to do it. I'm thinking about archiving as an ethical problem. I'm thinking about an economic issue, how much money to spend. How can we cut corners, how can we be creative, what's a creative response to this challenge.

I actually have the knowledge in my brain; universities don't have that, that's for sure. I think with *Maximum Rocknroll,* the work of the magazine is still happening. So though you may not have been there 25 years ago, you actually have an intimate and active relationship with the work of the magazine. It's the same way I feel about Dischord because actually these are living archives. These archives theoretically will continue to promote the idea of an exterior creation—being on the outside and creating things despite what the mainstream has put into place. The tiny roads that circumvent the interstates, they still take you somewhere.

The "why" of the archives for me, I thought about it a lot. There was this huge youth rebellion in the '60s and it sort of devolves in the '70s. As a kid growing up in the '70s I remember saying, "Wait a minute, where is the youth rebellion? Where is the constructive, creative, beautiful…where is the love-in? Where are the people that are challenging conventional thinking?" I was not alone. It turns out there were kids who were my age, and people younger and older than me, people all across the country and the world who were having the same fucking thought, so there was something that happened, something that occurred in the evolution of time that triggered among so many different people around the world. You know obviously, what was happening in New York with the Ramones, had an impact, but I think the Sex Pistols, I think that band especially, it was like a clarion of self-definition

People often say to me "you know, the Pistols were on a major label, how can you say that?" and I think it's because their message was self-definition, I didn't look at what the label was.

I think what kids in America got was self-defined, like let's decide that we are this and then let's be that. That resonated, that really resonated with me and as it turns out, again, with people all across the country. That aspect of punk rock, this deep network and ultimately these friendships that formed, all these magazines that were made, all these shows that were put on, all this communication that went back and forth, all that stuff happened, and I don't think that anyone actually ever thought, "I'm gonna make money from this." It's not that it wasn't a priority but it wasn't even a thing! So we were doing it to do it and I feel it was a pretty across the board phenomenon and something that was really…it just worked. It's also something that has become invisible.

MRR: Right, but still the layers totally exist today, the same exact sorts of networks, in some (most!) cases they can be traced back directly to the network you're talking about, through people and places.

Ian: Exactly, that network still goes on, generation, through generation, through generation but that…it didn't precede it. [Before DIY punk] there were certainly visionary people, there were certainly artistic people, there were certainly those kinds of connections made but the kind of networks formed at that time…I feel like that was a really revolutionary moment in culture, in American culture and it was primarily because it was done without the industry.

It was created without the industry and with no interest. It wasn't regional music, like a bunch of people in one area; it was actually national. And it was something that was so confounding to the industry, you know, the major record labels, the people that control, the people that think they own music. That's why their timeline always goes Sex Pistols, Nirvana. I see it as an invisible history. For me as a kid invisible histories were most inspiring, so why this is so important is because I think that we have these incredible collections of shards of pottery and they still lurk, they still resonate, and I think we have the spirit of which these things are formed.

I guess to me, also, it mostly seems like something to do, like it seemed a good thing to do. You know, there's nothing bad about it; there's truly no profit motive. It's just the idea of thinking "What the fuck did we do all this stuff for if we're not gonna make it available?"

MRR: To me it seems like this DIY punk movement is the longest continuous form of youth culture in the United States. I can't say that for certain, but I can't think of anything else. I feel like you have and we have in our archives the initial shards of this continuous culture and in order to see the duration we need to be able to illustrate the beginning.

Ian: Right, and I would agree. Obviously, I feel like I kind of recognize the beginning of this particular thing, I think I was part of that. I don't think I'm Paul Revere or some shit but I think looking at it empirically—name a punk rockish band from D.C. from the last ten years, most people can easily do it. From the early 2000s—Q and Not U or Black Eyes. From the '90s, pretty easy, From the '80s, name one. Then name one, from the mid '70s. Who is it? Okay, the Slickee Boys or whatever. It really wasn't until the '80s. Bad Brains, Minor Threat. That was the first time when people were like, "They're from Washington, DC." Can you even name a fucking rock band from Washington from the '60s or '70s? I can 'cause I used to work at a record store, but if I say a band like the British Walkers, does that mean something to you? What well-known rock band? Jack Casady of Jefferson Airplane went to Wilson but he didn't acknowledge it. You'd be hard pressed to find someone who did.

But we fucking ran it up the flagpole. I think mostly because we grew up in the shadow of New York—"You've gotta move to New York!"—and we were like fuck that. We're not moving to New York. I'm from here." I think it was a really important part of this city's development. I can't prove this but I feel pretty strongly that we were the first people to incorporate the DC flag motif, which is now ubiquitous. Every butcher and fishmonger and dry cleaner has some riff on it. Prior to that I don't think anyone ever thought of it.

And I don't think… I mean, it's awkward for me because I don't say things like, "This is so important, and I'm so important, this is a reflection of my importance" I don't think like that at all. I actually feel beholden to it, you know, like I have this stuff and I should do something with it. I'm not a materialistic person—I just have a lot of stuff; there's a difference. I don't get off on the fact that I own it, I get off on the idea that other people wanna hear it or wanna look at it, that makes me happy

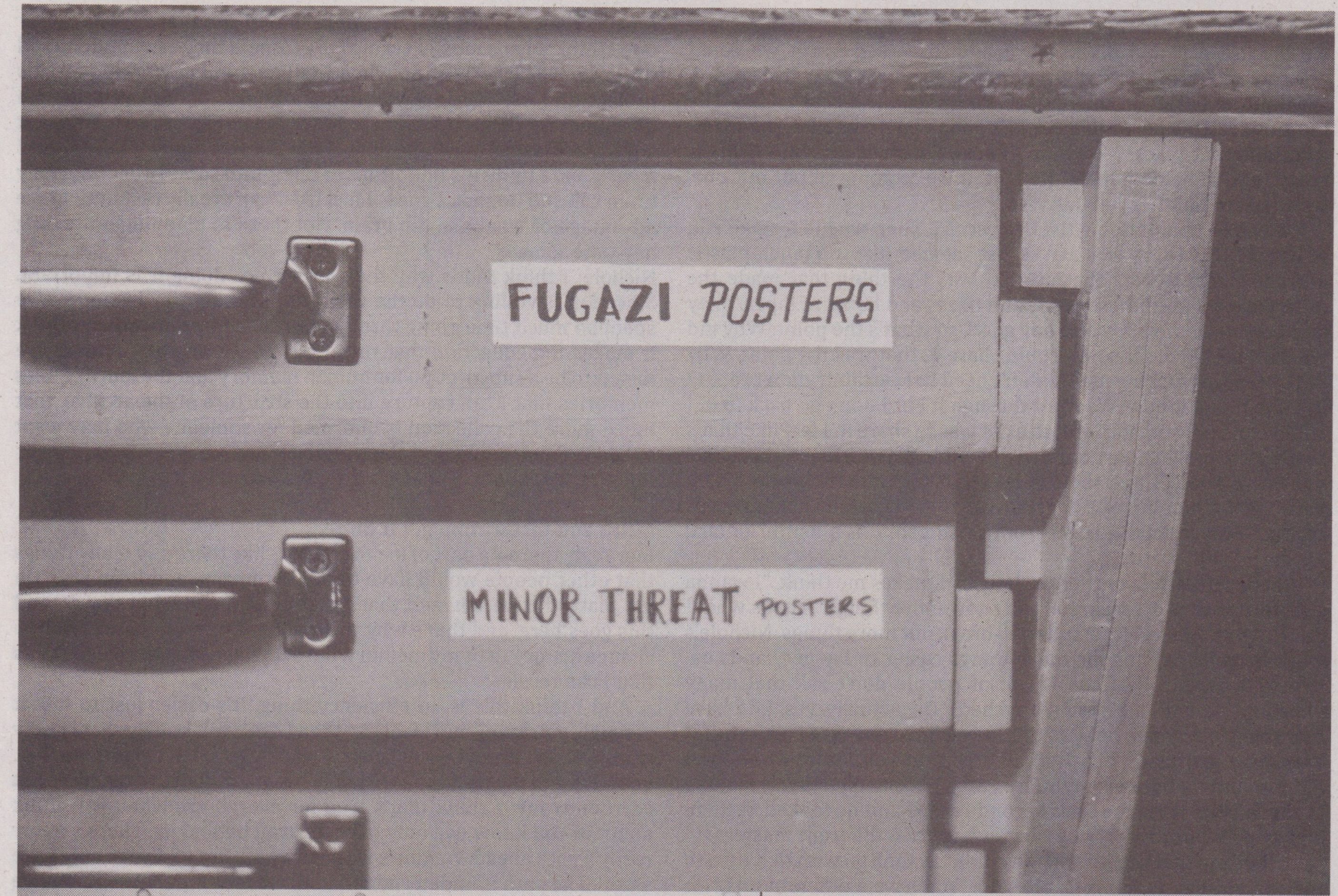
Occasionally I'll meet someone who says "Oh, can I look at that thing?" It's just so fascinating to actually see it and, in some ways, you know like, when we looked at, for instance, the Minor Threat tour book. It's so fundamental, you know, it's just so…it was so real and organic; it's just kids trying to figure shit out. And to some degree, the fact that there's any interest in Minor Threat at all today suggests that the kids figured it out.

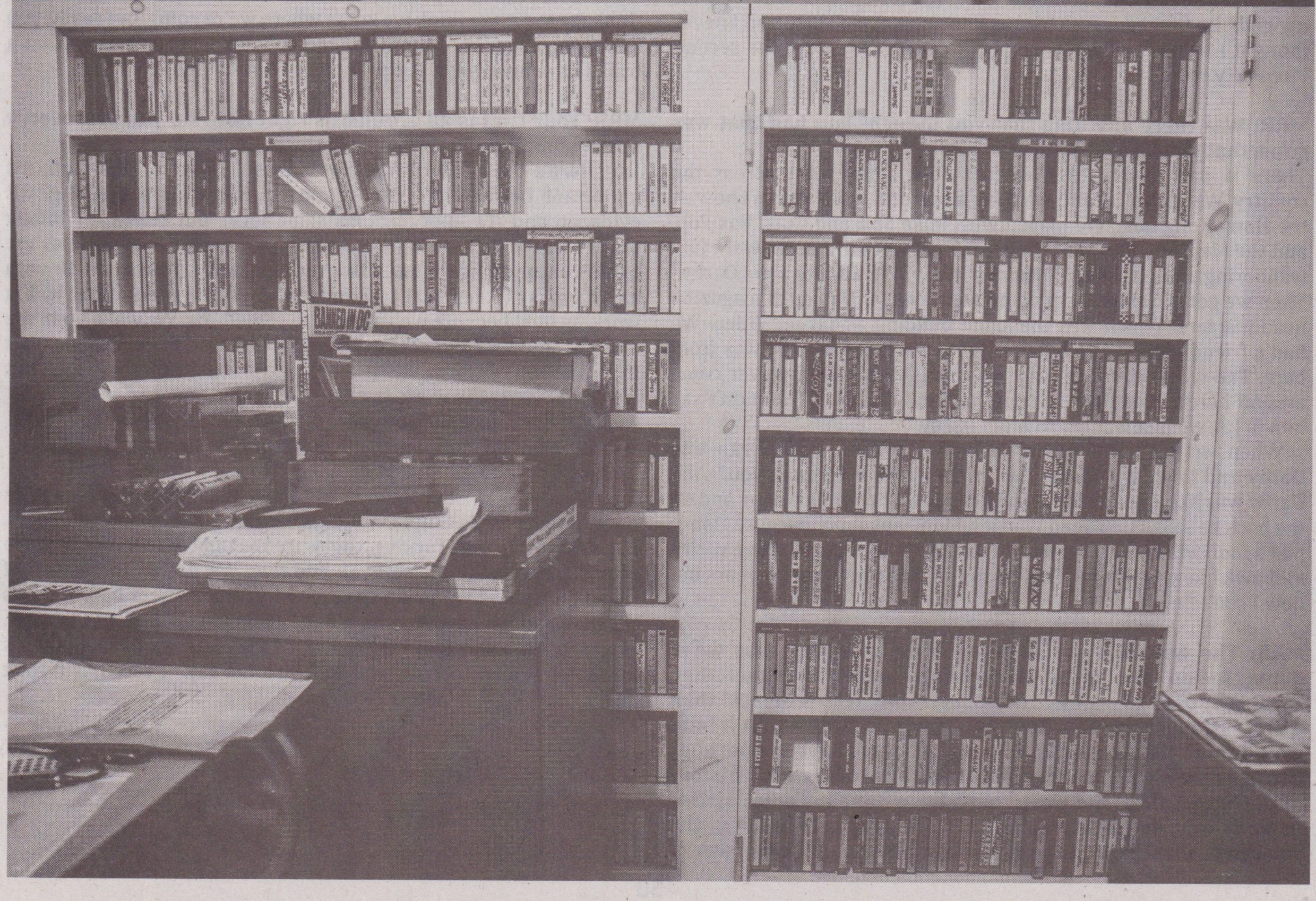
Over the years there have been people that have told me that the way I go about things doesn't make sense or it's crazy or it won't work or whatever, that I'm too idealistic and I feel like I've always just struggled with that. Yes, I'll just keep doing what I'm doing 'cause I don't know why it would be a bad thing to be idealistic.

MRR: At *MRR* we're in an interesting spot because there aren't many punk "institutions" and we are one. We've never missed a month, since 1982, we've made a magazine every month, sometimes two magazines. That means we've gotten to this point where forty years later and fuck, we haven't done anything with our archive, with all the stuff we've accumulated and made. We had to take a really big step back in order to figure out how to make the time for it.

Ian: I think when Fugazi stopped touring, I thought, I better do something with all this stuff. I have all this shit. I think also honestly, there's a mortal element. I'm going to die and when I die, someone's gotta figure it out. I'm trying to do a favor to the world here, especially to my family. I don't want Amy to have to be like, "What is this stuff?" I'm the one who knows. I'm just trying to clear it up. Part of the reason we did [the Fugazi live series] was because, at the beginning we were basically live recording so we could hear what we sounded like. Then a few people asked us, "Hey could I record your show" and we said sure, just send us a copy of the tape. That was just sort of a quid pro quo. If you're going to record it, share it with us. And then Joey P started to tour with us, our sound man and he was like "I want to record all of your shows, will you buy bricks of blank tapes?" "Yeah sure, great let's do this."

At some point, like a hundred tapes in, it just turned into, I guess we should keep doing this. We didn't listen to those tapes. We never listened to those tapes. The only time we listened to those recordings was if something crazy happened on the stage, if somebody tackled us or attacked us or there was a fight with a bunch of skinheads. "Let's listen to this and see what it sounds like!" When you're playing every night why the fuck would you listen to yourself after the gig in the car? There's no way. So by the time we finished up I had boxes and boxes and boxes of these tapes. In the '90s we had this long discussion—maybe we should


FUGAZI POSTERS
MINOR THREAT POSTERS


BANNED IN DC
MINOR THREAT

do a live record. Dischord #80 should be a Fugazi live record. And we discussed it and discussed it and discussed it but we could not come to terms with the criteria for this particular live record. Would it be based on the best performance? The best audio? The most interesting performance? Is it gonna be a compilation of stuff from different places? We didn't know. Finally it was like, "This is crazy" and at some point I thought, if we're going to put out one, we've got to put them all out.

We ended up not doing the live record. Then we did a small run of like 30 CDs to try that but it just seemed like too much plastic and too much waste. The internet was the thing that made the difference. I had all these boxes and boxes and boxes of tapes. They don't do me or anybody else any good, so what's the point. Why did we do this? We did it so we could share it, that was the point. Why did I keep this fucking mail? I don't need it. I certainly didn't reread it. I don't read it now. We went through it but I don't go back to it. I felt like the only reason for it to exist was to share it. I feel like that's really a compelling part of this whole thing. The idea of, it exists, I don't care, I don't think about it, let's put it out into the world. There have been a handful of things already where people contacted us saying, "Do you have a letter from so and so?" As a matter of fact, we do.

Whenever I give a tour of the house, it makes me think, "I wanna get more stuff processed, so I can show more things." That's what I think about. I get really inspired to break out more things. Nichole's work is really helping me make things easier to lay my hands on. If people asked questions—a lot of people don't ask that many questions—then I'd be really psyched. "Oh, actually, yes, I do have that thing." Someone once said, "Do you have any Fire Party stuff?" Why, as a matter of fact, I do. Actually, do you know who? Ryan Adams. And that dude knows Fire Party, like deeply. He was looking at the master tapes for their second record and he looked at them and said "What's that? Why do you have two different masters?" I said, "I mixed that record and they didn't wanna go with that mix, so they had someone remix it." He said, "You have a different mix? Oh my god." He flipped out and I was like, *wow*. A conversation I never thought I would be having, about the alternate mix of the second Fire Party record.

MRR: Was there anything that you thought you had that was gone, that you haven't found yet?

There is one poster. In 1980 the Teen Idles went across the country. We got to LA and we took a bus and we played a show at the Hong Kong Cafe. We played with Puke Spit and Guts, Vox Pop, and the Mentors. And the whole time we were in LA, we were just wandering around asking "Where's Darby? We want to meet Darby." Then we got to San Francisco and we stayed at *Damaged* magazine headquarters. Which was the same building as Target Video. We had a friend named Mitch Parker who worked there, he was from here. The whole time we were up there—"does Darby ever come around here? Does he ever come to San Francisco? We didn't see him in LA, we just wanted to meet Darby."

When we got home, three weeks later, Mitch Parker ran into Darby and he said. "These guys really wanted to meet you." And Darby was like, I heard about those guys! So he sent a poster, and on the back he said, "Hey Teen Wattles, Mohicans Rule" because Henry had a mohawk and everyone was saying, "There's a guy here with a mohawk like you Darby." That poster hung on my wall for years but now I can't find it.

MRR: The way that you're doing it and the way that we're doing it—on our own—is certainly more laborious than turning it over to an institution, certainly less "correct" than a professional archivist. Not to get too grandiose about it but I would think that what you have and what we have are perhaps two of of the biggest collections of this kind of material history in the world. Once the work that's been done becomes visible in some way, maybe it will also inspire people to be like, "Oh, you can be idealistic and you can do it this way and it can work." I mean that, I'm hopeful that people will see that.

Ian: I think what's mostly vexing for people is they can't understand the "why?" The "why!?" So when I tell people I'm working on this project they ask "Oh, are you doing a book?" or "Are you doing a documentary?" But there's no product. I'm doing it to do it. And that is very confusing to people, like "Why are you doing it?" because I have it and I think it's important to put it into some order while my brain can still do that. I guess I feel like I can't really rest until I take advantage of what's in the brain. Not that I'm planning on resting any time soon.

Nichole: I think that's why the way we are doing it is important. Since Ian is willing to do the work to put the order in, and we've spent so much time going through the collections together, I think it makes the collection that much more meaningful. Archives are meant to be a substitution for human memory and the more of Ian's memories that I can capture into the structure of the archive, that much more the collection is informed for someone who may want to come along and look at this stuff later.

Ian: But, you know...I'm also a little burdened by it.

MRR: You just wanna get it done.

Ian: Yeah, there's a part of me that thinks like there's so many things that other people would have to toil with from, and I can say, "Oh no, that's this person and that's that person and what that is, and this goes here, and that's why this happens." And I'm not trying to change history to fit my memory, I'm actually trying to give the facts that I can recall.

And I think this is an efficiency thing. It's easier just to talk it through, you know and I feel like then I can...you know, what I really wanna do is I wanna write songs, I wanna get back to work on that. I don't live in the past but I certainly live in evidence of the past that surrounds me. I think that's true for everybody, when you think about it. You know; we only have the trail behind us. There's never really a path ahead. We think we have a path but really we only have a trail. The path is undetermined until we take a step. You know, we think we see it, we think we know where we're going, but really, you know, you never know until you move. You know, so everyone has a trail. I have my trail; it happens to be I haven't moved.

MRR: Your trail is all around us right now. Do you ever worry about something happening to the collection?

Ian: Here's the deal. Ultimately it doesn't matter. This stuff, it's important because it's like stamp collecting or something, it's evidence and it's important on some level, but really, it's totally unnecessary. 99.9999% of the world will never ever hear of me or this or anything of it whatsoever. It just has nothing to do with anything. So I keep that in mind. I feel pretty good about it. I'm working on it because we've gotta do something. We wake up in the day. You gotta do something with your time, so do something that feels like you're contributing. The contribution isn't the paper, but it's actually just the work, the care.

Nichole: But it's important to the .000001% of the people

Ian: Sure, but on another level I would say it's nothing.

Nichole: It's very nihilistic.

Ian: It's not nihilistic! I see it as totally the opposite. I see it as pure...I think life is simple. And that everything is an accoutrement. Food, water, air, and fucking, those are the only four things that are required. Everything else is an additive. We decide the values of these things and we make them good or make them bad. If that's the case and we have that kind of power, then do well and be well. That's just the way that I try to live. So for me, it's a burden but it's not, it's nothing. Nichole, you've heard me say, "I care but I don't give a fuck."

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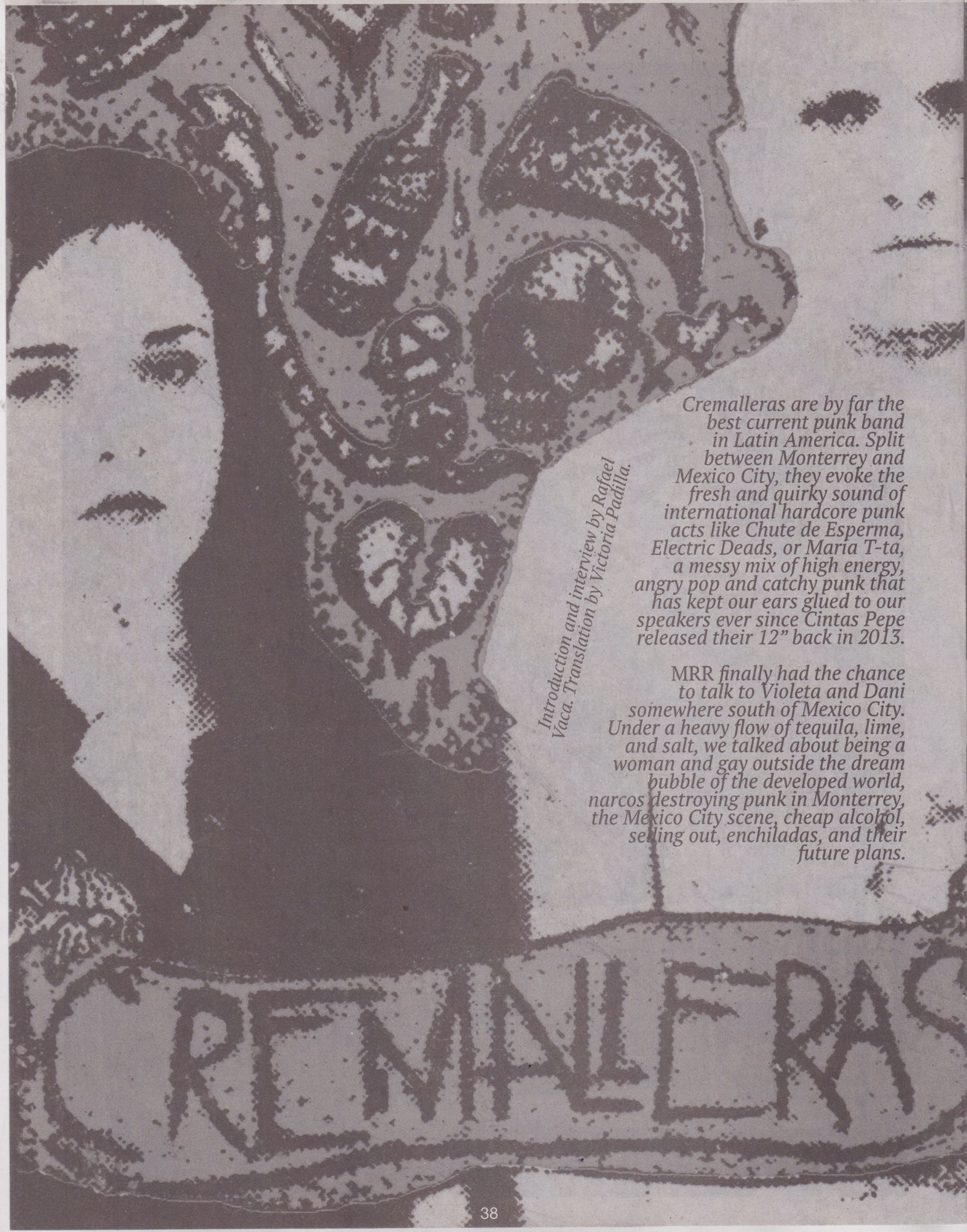

CREMALLERAS

Introduction and interview by Rafael Vaca. Translation by Victoria Padilla.

Cremalleras are by far the best current punk band in Latin America. Split between Monterrey and Mexico City, they evoke the fresh and quirky sound of international hardcore punk acts like Chute de Esperma, Electric Deads, or Maria T-ta, a messy mix of high energy, angry pop and catchy punk that has kept our ears glued to our speakers ever since Cintas Pepe released their 12" back in 2013.

MRR finally had the chance to talk to Violeta and Dani somewhere south of Mexico City. Under a heavy flow of tequila, lime, and salt, we talked about being a woman and gay outside the dream bubble of the developed world, narcos destroying punk in Monterrey, the Mexico City scene, cheap alcohol, selling out, enchiladas, and their future plans.

MRR: Tell us who you are. Did you start the band together in Monterrey or was it always long distance?

Dani: We started the band in Monterrey in 2011.

Violeta: We are both from Monterrey. I'm a little older than Dani. Dani has been going to shows since he was very young. Since he was a little boy. *[laughs]* And I was always playing the shows he was going to.

Dani: And we ended up being friends. Then we became better friends.

Violeta: We danced, you taught me your dance moves.

Dani: We had a lot in common and so we talked about how it would be cool to start a band. I was not playing in a band.

Violeta: I was playing with Ratas del Vaticano but it was like the twilight of Ratas del Vaticano.

Dani: One day Violeta told me she was coming to my house. I had a room to rehearse and from there we started to get together. That time we bought the famous Tonayán (1.5 USD for one liter) and started to drink a lot.

Violeta: We were drunk by the time we started playing. It was that time when we wrote "Cara descompuesta." We did that one and I think "No me importa." We were so drunk. But it seems that it worked that we were drunk, because it was the only way we could write a song.

MRR: You started with an already defined sound. Did you know what you wanted to do with Cremalleras from the beginning?

Violeta: We never talked about doing a band that sounded like this or that. I just thought that whatever happened would be fine because Dani and I have a lot in common and he would like what I think to do with the guitar.

Dani: I never thought of that. We only talked about doing a band, but nothing clear. The two of us have always played in punk bands so we did not need to talk about what it would end up being.

Violeta: What we did talk about that we wanted a band with a bass.

MRR: What happened? You couldn't find a bass player?

Dani: We tried to have a bass player but it didn't work. We ended up being much more comfortable as just two people.

Violeta: We sometimes would get invited to gigs and we would say "We play without a bass, but we'll be getting a bass player later..." But it never happened!

MRR: How was Monterrey at that time? How was the punk scene?

Violeta: In 2011, Monterrey was in a time of very strong decline and social crisis. Before that Monterrey was always known in Mexico because it was a city where there were many bands and where all the new things from music originated when it came to "rock." There was a very large and diverse scene. Many bands and many places to play. There was a whole entire neighborhood where one night you could choose to go to several gigs.

Dani: It was the Barrio Antiguo. There were many bars that gave you the chance to do shows there. There was not a specific place until there was Garaje. There was el Clandestino, which had some reggae nights, but it was where punk shows were generally played.

Barrio Antiguo disappeared after the wave of violence that swept Monterrey.

Violeta: There was a wave of violence because of the drug war, thanks to Felipe Calderon, then president of Mexico. I think that shook Monterrey and many other places in Mexico.

Dani: It affected all businesses. Even my family, we were also direct victims of that stuff. It's something that affected many businesses, families, lives. It was a shitty time, and people did not want to go out because of the violence. So then people didn't go to bars and the bars closed because they didn't feel safe.

Violeta: That area of Barrio Antiguo became controlled by the drug cartels that moved in there. Then there began to be many conflicts and they began to close places.

MRR: Did the narcos arrive at the shows?

Violeta: It happened once...well, several times.

Dani: Yes, it happened on that show in the Garaje. I was also there.

MRR: They came with covered faces, guns in hand?

Dani: It was just so fast. I was about to go outside, waiting for a friend to come out. And suddenly one guy with a gun and two other guys came in. And, it was only three of them. The owners of this place were our friends and I used to work there. But by the time I notified the owners the narcos had already begun to threaten people, closing doors and yelling "everyone down." It was very quick. There wasn't a moment to realize what was happening. Because it was a chill place and most people there were friends and it was all cool, nobody would have imagined that a guy with a gun would come in. No one had noticed what was happening until we were all on the floor.

MRR: Were there punks linked to the narcos? Were the punks involved in that?

Dani: Not that I knew.

MRR: Dani, you live in Monterrey and Violeta here in Mexico City. What happened?

Dani: Well there was a time when Monterrey stopped having as much to do as before. Violeta finished studying and decided to come over here. It was also my plan but for other reasons, I couldn't move and stayed in Monterrey. It was something she wanted to do and did it.

MRR: How do you practice if you are in two different cities?

Dani: Although I do not live here, I come often. When I come we have days to rehearse. We practice here in Roger's room. We do new songs, practice old ones. It is not frequent but it happens from time to time. Violeta also goes to Monterrey but she has fewer chances because of her work. But generally we practice here in Mexico City, I have always wanted to live here.

MRR: Do Cremalleras play much in Monterrey?
Dani: In fact it is much more common than we play here in Mexico City. In Monterrey we don't play very often.

MRR: Don't you like Monterrey?
Dani: Monterrey is very weird now. I don't know what is happening right now, but I feel it. Every time there are fewer people at punk shows in Monterrey.
Violeta: Everyone got used to the death of the night scene. There was a time of total death.
Dani: Everyone started doing other things and now that things are beginning to happen again, everyone is away from the show scene.

MRR: What's up with Monterrey? How are its people?
Violeta: I could not say I'm the typical average "Regiomontana" [*demonym for Monterrey*]. Neither is Dani...but the stereotype is always that they love football and are supposedly hard workers. It is an industrial city, a city of men, a city of people who tell you that "you have to work and this weekend we can eat Carne Asada."

MRR: Is machismo worse in Monterrey than in Mexico City?
Dani: In Mexico City I feel freer to be fully as I am. In Monterrey sometimes even to dress in a certain way is uncomfortable. Because people there will turn to look and yell things. It is more conservative. Monterrey is one of the places where there is the most discrimination in Mexico.
Violeta: Towards women, homosexuals, transgender people, indigenous people. There is a lot of racism.
Dani: It has always been really cool being in punk because I feel it is a space where I can be fine and there are no problems, but even then it still happens that at a show you bump into some asshole who cannot see a gay in a gig. He cannot see you without being offended or doing something stupid. The same happens with women. It always happens that you're watching a show and there's always an asshole that is too much of a jerk. That's pretty shitty.

MRR: Are all shows in Monterrey hostile?
Dani: In Monterrey they have yelled "Joto" [*derogatory word for homosexuals*] at me, which makes me laugh.
Violeta: It is more hostile, compared to Mexico City or Guadalajara, in that sense.

MRR: And the gay scene in Monterrey, how is it?
Dani: I've never been very involved in the gay scene in Monterrey. Monterrey gay places are quite classist. If you're going to one of them you have to go well groomed, with specific clothing. I've only been a few times, I do not like to dress up. In Monterrey there is much discrimination among gay people. If you're effeminate many stare at you meanly or don't even want to look at you. If you're not dressed a certain way or if you have different taste you look bad. I really have not felt as much a part of the gay scene in Monterrey because being in those places I feel more uncomfortable than in other places. I do not fit in the gay *Regiomontano* profile.
Violeta: What is the gay *Regiomontano* profile?
Dani: Shirt halfway open, so that you see the chest with a rosary in his neck—totally hypocritical by the way—jeans and moccasins, hair with hair gel combed back. I cannot do anything like that, I do not have those clothes and I have no hair for to me to style that way. *[everyone laughs]*

MRR: There is a new scene of bands happening in Monterrey. Any recommendations?
Dani: Reptoides! Los Momios is a very new band that feels like is pretty cool. They sound very cool in comparison with punk in Monterrey lately. Now I feel it is a lot of very macho hardcore.

MRR: On the flyers of shows in Monterrey I always see sponsorships from beer companies. Is that normal?
Dani: It is a trend in Monterrey, at any party, if you put the logo you get free beer. So it has become very common...
Violeta: There was a time that there was sponsorship from any bullshit. Cigarettes, beer, Jack Daniels, canned margaritas. By going to an event they give you things with the hope of seeing the fruits later. Is something that is not done here in Mexico City so much, as there are so many people that consumption is guaranteed.
Dani: If you're organizing a show you have to be consistent. If you do a punk show you cannot have company sponsorship. It's so fake.
Violeta: It is fake. I think many bands in Monterrey know that it is undesirable to play at a stage in a punk show and have a huge banner of a brand of beer on the back. You know, very hypocritical. But it is something that is still quite common.
Dani: It always happens in shows in Monterrey. It also depends on who does it. For example, the guys from Grabaciones Puro Pinche Pedo make their shows completely independently. They do everything they can and do good shows. They organized the Blank Spell show and Warthog, among others.

The sponsorship thing began in Monterrey also because no one supports shows, so the only way to get money to pay the bands was to get the free beer. But I don't think it's the way to do things, there are other ways. Maybe not with so many people, but people who will be there will be there for the show and not 200 idiots who only go for the free beer. Most do not care about supporting bands, they just want to get drunk.

MRR: Do you think Monterrey is more gringo than here?
Violeta: We could say that Monterrey is more gringo, culture of people in various things is very gringa. For example, in Monterrey we celebrate mostly Christmas, Halloween, and those gringo things. However, in Mexico City is more like Three Wise Men on January 6, Dia de los Muertos. No one in Monterrey celebrates Dia de los Muertos.
Dani: I do, is my sister's birthday. *[everyone laughs]*
Violeta: There is a link with the United States, but it is not like talking about a city in Texas.

MRR: Have you played any other cities in Mexico?
Dani: Guadalajara, it's pretty cool.
Violeta: One of the best shows I've ever played.
Dani: People were very lively. It is one of those times you play and people make you feel comfortable. I enjoyed it a lot.
Violeta: Maybe is also because Guadalajara is quite gay friendly. One of the gay capitals of the world, where they do not feel threatened by us. Not like in Monterrey, where there is a more distant feel.
Dani: They see a woman and a gay playing and it's a problem.

MRR: What is the beef between Monterrey and Mexico City?
Dani: I feel more Regiomontano than Chilango. I always have the best time here, I have more friends here than in Monterrey.

But there is something weird, some kind of dispute between Regiomontanos and Chilangos.
Violeta: People in Mexico City think the rest of Mexico is a large ranch. You come here and you're like a farmer in the city. Sometimes they are offensive and don't realize it. There is Chilango centrism, so to speak. They think that what comes from outside is not important. Maybe they do have a point because it is a very centralized country.

MRR: Violeta, you made the Hexagonal Show. It's the best concert I've been here in Mexico City.
Violeta: That's great! We did it, Dani and me!
Dani: I supported her from afar!
Violeta: Distant cheering? *[everyone laughs]*

MRR: Is it something that you will continue to do? [*By the time of publication there has been a second Hexagonal Show.*]
Violeta: It would be nice to have a Volume Two.
Dani: Doing it again would be good. That show we did it with a cause. So there was no plan to do it again. We did it at the time to raise money for a friend who was having health problems and had difficulties with money for medical expenses. It was an idea that we came up with to send her some support.
Violeta: But it would not hurt to make a sequel or something! The idea was that only Mexican women-led bands could play. The thing is that before there weren't so many bands where women played, both in Mexico City and Mexico in general. Last year very good bands that I didn't know about started playing so we invited them to play.

MRR: Mexico City bands, what would you recommend?
Dani: I really, really, really, really, really like Mujercitos. I think that currently Riña and Mujercitos are the bands that I like the most. Riña live is in my top. Muerte is like a different thing altogether. I also like Antisex and Especie Fallida. Sacrificio is good. But, Mujercitos is my favorite, but after seeing Riña I said to myself, "Now I'm conflicted, I don't know what to do."
Violeta: I really like Riña, they are my favorite band. There have been a lot of good bands coming out of Mexico City. Before there was only Inservibles and that was it. That was the only good band in Mexico City.

MRR: What do you like and don't like about Mexico City?
Dani: It's very different from Monterrey. I like everything, everything of Mexico City. But the only thing I don't love is that all the time there are so many people everywhere and it sometimes stresses me out a lot.
Violeta: The fact that there are so many people and it's such a huge city makes distances feel larger, not just physically. There is a lot distance. In Monterrey everything is closer, you know everyone.

MRR: You went to the festival This is Austin, Not That Great. What did you think? How did it go?
Violeta: It was a little chaotic. We fucked up a bit.
Dani: I feel like I did not do well. But I can't say that we did bad because people told us that they had a good time. It encouraged me to hear that because when I finished playing, I felt very bad.
Violeta: I saw almost all the bands that played at the festival and they all played their instruments so well, such a precise and accurate sound. We are the messy ones... *[everyone laughs]* At the time of the show, I was embarrassed, but we had a good time. It was good! I also thought, you know what? I don't give a fuck!
Dani: I was very nervous.
Violeta: What would people say? We are some kids that never practice...

MRR: You sold all the tapes anyway, right? So, not so bad.
Dani: I was just nervous and when I'm nervous I don't function. It was just that, but overall it was a really cool festival. I saw bands that I really wanted to see. We also thank Juan Carlos for inviting us. It's a festival of the bands he likes, so we found it a nice gesture for him to invite us, Mujercitos, and Muerte.

MRR: How do you think that punk is different in the USA?
Violeta: There are good things and there are bad things. There are many good things, many very cool bands, there are many people who organize shows, there is a culture of punk of decades, people are still sustaining punk. On the other hand, as Mexican, you do not feel so comfortable in some places because there is racism, there is much prejudice, I do not know, ugly attitudes toward Mexicans. Although they themselves do not admit they are racist, white hegemony shows.

MRR: You released a demo before the 12" didn't you?
Violeta: No, we went straight for the LP. David Rata recorded us in the practice space next to Dani's house. Yecal (Cintas Pepe) had never heard of us. He saw us at a show, but I didn't know if it would be to his liking. He asked us to make a record, he was confident in us. The drawings on the cover are from Yecal Disaster, the ones on the back are from Abraham Diaz.
Dani: The songs we wrote for this album were about things we were living at the time. We did not have a specific topic which we wanted to talk about. There were very ugly things happening in Monterrey at the time. But then also Violeta came up with a strange story like "Cara Descompuesta" which I also thought was cool. At that time I was depressed over a man so...

MRR: Is that where the song "Exnovios" comes from?
Violeta: No, that's about another man! *[everyone laughs]*
Violeta: There are many broken hearts on that record. But we were also sick of Monterrey, sad and angry. I like many lyrics that are a story, like a tale.

MRR: Have your recorded anything new?
Violeta: Yes, we are recording a new record. We don't know what is going to happen with it. Hopefull Cintas Pepe [will release it], but I don't want to make them feel obligated. Oh well, now they'll have to release it! The important thing is to release those songs.
Dani: Even if it's on tape.

MRR: Do you think the tone of the record will be different from before?
Violeta: I think it's going to be different. We are experiencing different things and now I feel that the lyrics are very important to the songs. Before I did not care so much and wrote anything. I'd like to talk about things about living in Mexico City.

MRR: Who writes the songs?
All: Both!
Dani: There are very few songs we wrote on our own. Usually when we are making a song we help each other.
Violeta: We do a tune, then sit down together and write lyrics.

MRR: What do you have planned next? Do you want to tour? Or just make the record?
Violeta: We want to do both, to make the record and a tour. But I would like to make the record first. We would like to tour somewhere else with another Mexican band. If not it would only be Dani and me, two defenseless souls, like two helpless puppies.
Violeta: We want to tour with Mujercitos and go to the United States. To the East Coast, which is where there seems to be more of the kind of punk movement we like.

MRR: How did yesterday's show turn out?
Violeta: Really cool!
Dani: The best!
Violeta: The only thing is that the microphone electrocuted me. Oh! You don't know because you didn't go! But I got electrocuted. My mouth touched the microphone and the guitar strings electrocuted me, it was pretty crazy. I thought everything was sounding wrong, but it was cool, I liked it a lot. We enjoyed it a lot, the other bands playing were Utimo Imperio, Riña, Zotz, Kurraka…it was a good show.

MRR: Now in confidence, what happened to Ratas del Vaticano? Tell us all!
Dani: They didn't play much in Monterrey and people get strange ideas of bands…
Violeta: We were a hated band, but Cremalleras too.
Dani: Yeah?! I want to know!
Violeta: So many comments…People tell me "you play well for a woman" or "Oh, it's very nice to see a girl playing in a band," as if it was cute someway. But things have changed, I've been playing in bands since I was fifteen. I have seen many

DE S
GIRLS LIVING OUTSIDE SOCIETY'S

cliques of different people, many types of people in shows and their reaction to me playing. There's been from men wanting to tune my guitar or saying "stop playing because it sounds terrible," to actually moving my amp while playing, or yelling "sing louder" or things I felt were aggressive. Men want to control you. That happened to me when I was younger, I was more innocent before, now I won't allow that to happen.

Dani: They tell me things like "It's pretty crazy that you're a gay drummer..." I had a "friend" who used to tell me "you're my best gay friend," and I did not understand whether it was a compliment or an insult. But if you think a little bit about it, it's not right what he's saying. There are things you can't avoid, but you do not have to accept them, but you can also ignore it and try to do your thing without getting involved with those shitty people.

MRR: There is an interest in Mexican punk from other countries. Many bands come on tour, what do you think of this?

Violeta: A few years ago, I would have never thought of a show in Mexico City with foreign bands like is happening now. Many bands that we wanted to see have come.

The gringos who come to México are not typical bands. The average gringo will not come to Mexico, even less if it's to play. But they know that here the shows are pretty cool and it's a lot of fun. They know from other bands that have come that things are going well and are encouraged to come.

MRR: What do you do for a living?

Violeta: It's a kind of boring, translations.

Dani: I'm now helping out my mom because she lost her workers. My aunts used to help her but one got an embolism, she is in a wheelchair now and can't help. The other aunt moved to the United States, so she then ran out of trustworthy workers. I was working in a restaurant and when this happened she told me: "it would be nice for you to help me right now because I don't have anyone to help me." And I have a shop with my sister since 2008 which is a clothing store.

Violeta: The sad life of Mexican workers. *[everyone laughs]*

MRR: Food is something important in Mexico, what are some of your favorite dishes?

Dani: The pozole, enchiladas. If there is opportunity to eat enchiladas that's what I want. Chilaquiles, tacos de suadero, flautas.

Violeta: Enchiladas!

MRR: What restaurant would you recommend in Monterrey?

Violeta: El Rey del Cabrito!

Dani: El Rey del Cabrito is a place that people always recommend in Monterrey, but to be honest is a shithole. I've been a few times and it's kind of "nice"

Violeta: I've never been in my entire fucking life, it's a place for tourists.

Dani: Waiters are assholes and you do not feel comfortable. I recommend the tacos de la Alameda, very good. They are open until dawn, so when you are all falling down drunk, the first choice is always to go to the Alameda for some tacos!

MRR: Have you seen this taqueria in Guadalajara called "Tacos Gay"?

Violeta: Tacos Gay?!

Dani: I definitely want to go to those tacos.

Violeta: Those are the two words that Dani wants to hear.

Dani: Tacos and gay represent me.

We drank too much tequila and forgot about the recorder...We headed to a Cremalleras show somewhere in downtown Mexico City.

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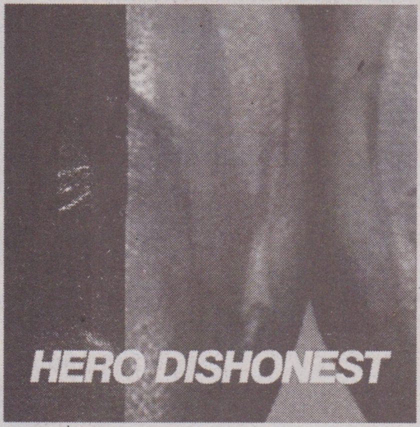

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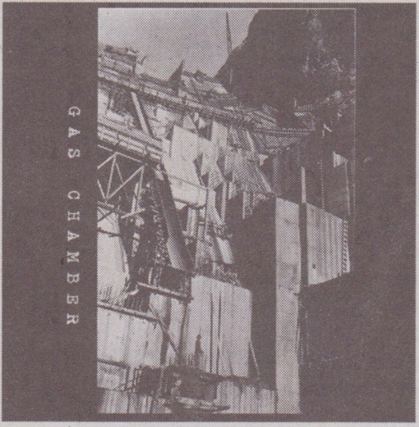

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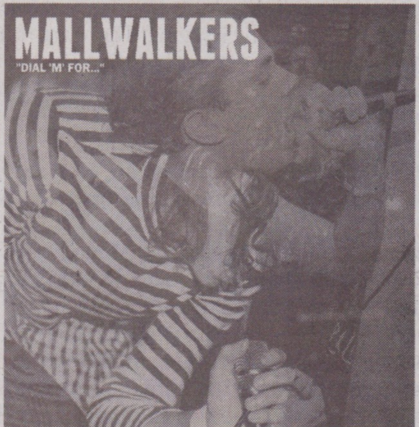

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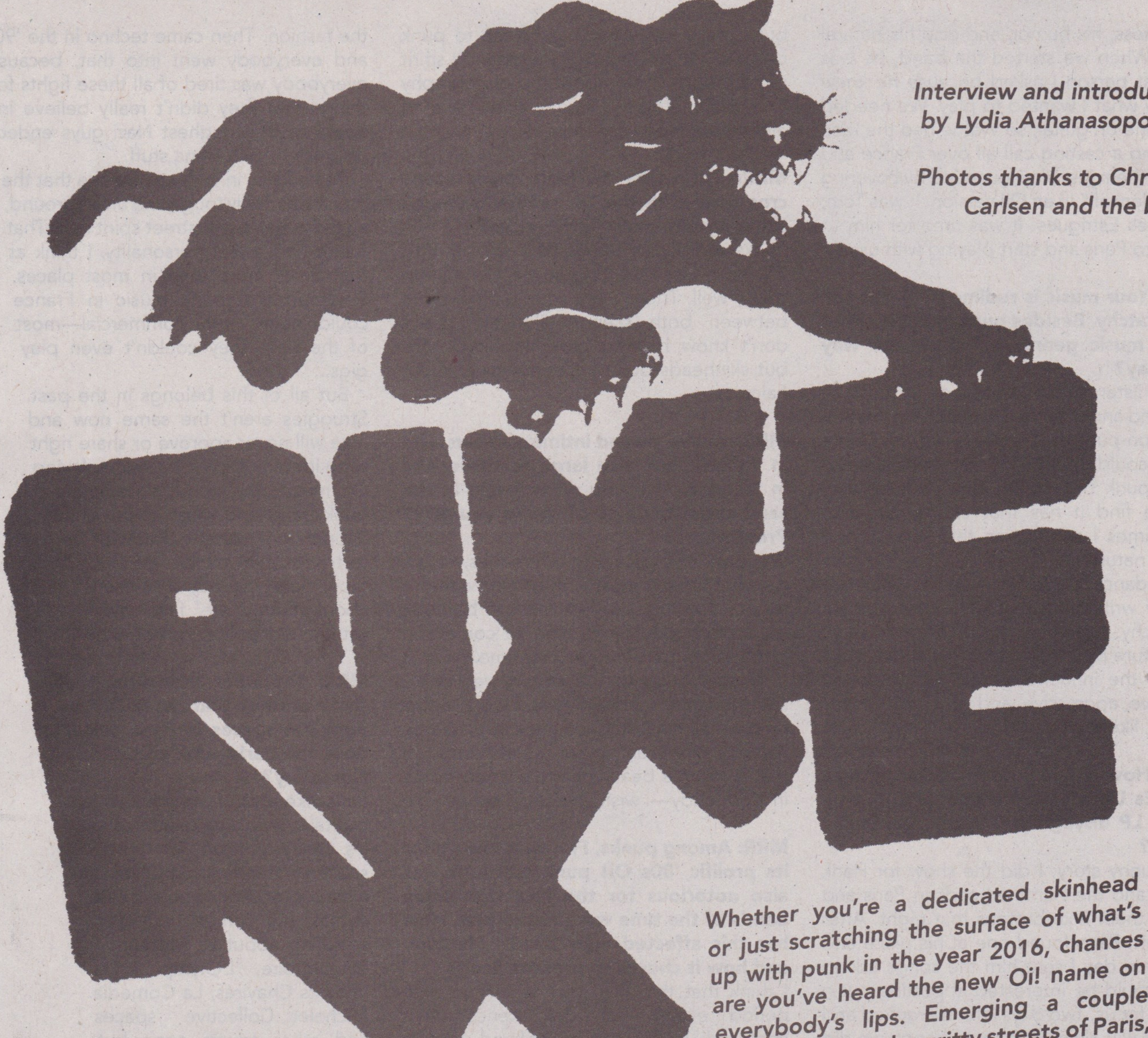

Interview and introduction by Lydia Athanasopoulou.

Photos thanks to Christina Carlsen and the band.

Whether you're a dedicated skinhead or just scratching the surface of what's up with punk in the year 2016, chances are you've heard the new Oi! name on everybody's lips. Emerging a couple years ago from the gritty streets of Paris, Rixe have been on a mission to bring back the golden sound of '80s French Oi! and, with only two 7" records to date and one song on the La Force Dans La Oi! Vol. 2 EP, it seems they're succeeding. The songs are rough, uncomplicated and, perhaps most importantly for this band, they're appropriately and refreshingly short. With just one song stretching beyond the three-minute mark but every song scoring a 10/10 on the Catchy-Memorable Scale, RIXE seem to nail the punk-to-Oi! ratio like few bands before them…in this decade anyway. Since 2015, I've managed to see them live a couple times (once in my hometown in Athens!) and since have kept in touch with Max, the drummer and mind behind the band. They just wrapped up a US tour, so I figured it was time to check in and have a chat.

MRR: After just two EPs that sold out almost immediately and a handful of tours and shows around Europe and the US, it seems you have managed to revive Oi! among the punks! How do you respond to this popularity?

I don't really know what happened but I'm very surprised in a good way that people like our music. There aren't that many bands in Europe playing early Oi! like this, so I guess people were waiting for it. It was a big thing to sing in our mother tongue; France has a very influential punk / Oi! scene from the '80s so it made sense for us to play a style we used to be good at. Also, this kind of music has to sound hard and raw and that's exactly what we wanted to do.

MRR: Who writes all the music and lyrics? Who is the most *infatigable* member of the band?

I wrote every Rixe song, but sometimes for lyrics we change some words all together. I usually do demos by myself at home and then we work on it if needed. For the first 7" I played all the instruments because the songs were all ready. Then we started the band and playing shows.

I do a lot for this band but the most *infatigable* member is Tom for sure—he never stops talking. He's a real nerd; you can talk with him about music for hours. A "scanner" as we say in France.

MRR: Back to the start. How did you all end up in Rixe?

I've known Wattie for a long time and we became friends because I was amazed by his politeness, his humor, and also his natural class. When we started the band, he was the first person I asked because he knew exactly what I wanted to play. We needed someone on guitar, so Wattie had the idea of doing a casting call all over France and one of them just blew our mind by covering "Wonderwall" in an Oi! version. It was Tom, from Les Estrigues. It was time for him to move to Paris and start playing with us.

MRR: Your music is rudimentary but still ultra catchy. Besides punk and Oi!, what other music genres influence the way you play?

We all listen to different kinds of music in the band and of course Rixe gets inspiration from non-punk or Oi! music. The way I write songs could be a bit generic compared to other punk bands, but that's maybe why people find it has that catchy element. Sometimes I don't even think about it, it seems natural.

Eurodance could be a major influence for the writing process—the choruses are so catchy. I can't deny, I think "Mr. Vain" by Culture Beat could be a great Oi! song. Beside the influences, Rixe has to sound primitive, aggressive, and very basic on the record, like the way we play live.

MRR: How did your cooperation with La Vida Es Un Mus come about? Is it true that a LP discography is perhaps in the works?

It's a funny story; I did the show for Hank Wood and the Hammerheads in Paris and I gave them Rixe buttons that night. After they left, Paco found one at his place and the same day I sent him the songs asking if he would be interested in putting out a record for us. Two days later he replied and said he was down. I'm really happy we did it with him, LVEUM is one of my favorite record labels in Europe and Paco did a great job. Some Oi! labels asked to release our music but I really wanted to stay close to punk because I think it matches the band's spirit more. I don't know about the discography LP but something is sure: we will have an eight-track tape very soon.

MRR: Does the Parisian punk scene crossover with the Oi! skinhead scene? What are the major differences?

Punks and skins often go to the same gigs. The scene isn't that big so people mix up pretty well. There are a couple differences between both scenes, like the punks don't know how to bleach their clothes but skinheads don't know anything about haircuts.

MRR: You've played intimate shows, like in Athens, but also large festivals, like in Sweden. Do you draw a line in the sand about the kind of shows you play? Preferences?

We really enjoy playing DIY venues, I think it's what fits the most with us and with our way of thinking, but festivals can be cool; it's a good way for people to come and listen to our band for the first time.

When we go to the beach we like to build massive sandcastles and we also like to draw all sort of funny lines in it. Wattie recently made an amazing self-portrait in the sand on a beach near his family home in Normandy—I wish you could see it!

MRR: Among punks, France is known for its prolific '80s Oi! punk scene. It was also notorious for the fact that some bands of the time were nationalist. How has this affected your band's ideology and how it choses to present itself?

I think that the '80s were a very intense period everywhere and scenes were confused. It was not as defined as it is today. It's hard to say that kids who were on the streets 90% percent of their time—doing hard drugs and spending their time drinking and fighting—could really have any kind of coherent political way of thinking or acting—left or right, don't you think? When you talk with elders here and when you read interviews, you see that most of the people who made up that scene were just lost kids, going from left wing to right wing, just following the fashion. Then came techno in the '90s and everybody went into that, because everybody was tired of all these fights for things that they didn't really believe in! Some of the toughest Nazi guys ended up going into Krishna stuff.

It affects us in so far as we like that the scene was really tough and underground, so there was a real street spirit in it. That scene had a real personality, I think at that time, more than in most places. Skinhead and punk music in France could never turn commercial—most of the time they couldn't even play gigs...

But all of this belongs in the past. Struggles aren't the same now and Rixe will never approve or share right wing ideology. Even if we are playing Oi! music, the band is definitely a punk band and most of our shows happen in this scene. Rixe was born to try to bring back the French Oi! glory years sound, and then talk about things we face everyday without any political ambiguity.

MRR: You were telling me that there are not that many DIY or punk-run spaces in Paris. What does the Paris punk scene look like today?

Paris, like a lot of other European capitals, is facing gentrification. It's really difficult to run DIY spaces in the region. But we still have bars accepting punk shows, so it's still something. We're speaking about La Mécanique Ondulatoire, L'Olympic, Les Instants Chavirés, La Comedia Michelet...Collective spaces and other squats open but most of the time they don't last. They're doing their best to not get shut down. Most of the good punk bands in France are linked to the garage scene; bands like Asphalt, Pierre et Bastien, Sergent Poppers, Sun Sick, Police Control, Stalled Minds...I wish there were more hardcore bands in France; even if we are not known for [our hardcore scene] compared to the UK or Spain.

MRR: Perhaps more than any other genre, Oi! and football are often closely linked. How is it in Paris right now?

Yes that's true, Oi! and football used to be related. But actually there is the same proportion of football supporters in the Oi! scene now as there are in the French population. It's not really relevant nowadays. Thugs and hooligans aren't related to our Oi! scene anymore.

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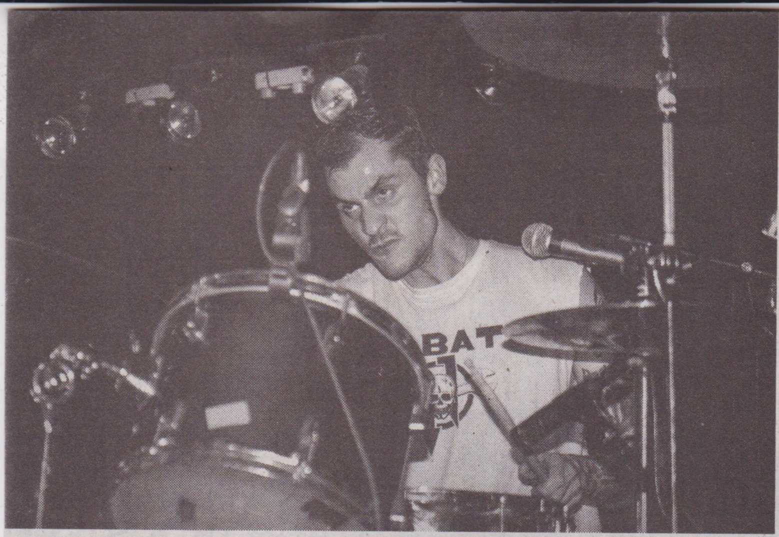

MRR: Who gets into the most fights?
One time Wattie did get involved in a fight with a bear, in Russia. This was the scariest place.

MRR: Memorable moments?
If there's a place stuck in my head it's when we played at La Taverne de Duchenaud in Malcombes. Not Dead Yet in Toronto was awesome, a lot of Québécois showed up and so many people were singing along. Same in Athens; I don't know if half of the crowd was familiar with speaking French but they were singing along to almost every song!

MRR: Have you managed to get arrested yet?
A couple months ago we were shopping at the *marché aux puces* (famous flea market in the north of Paris). Tom tried to steal a DVD of *Amélie* and got caught by an undercover policeman. It's the only time we got in trouble with justice.

MRR: If you had to name one great thing, and one frustrating thing, about the state of current French punk, what would it be?
The great thing about French punk is the fact that people from different scenes are mostly united. Since we're facing a lack of places to play, people go to the same places and it makes some interesting connections between them. The frustrating thing is, like I said earlier, the problem of not having DIY venues in large cities that can gather punks. Maybe there's a lack of innovative bands in French punk too.

MRR: You just went on a US tour. Impressions?
This tour was probably the craziest one for all three of us. We did the West Coast and South West in three weeks with the best people. Criminal and Ausencia from LA joined us on the road—this trip changed our lives forever. Here are a couple stories:

- We met a stuntman in Sante Fe who did a backflip from a skate ramp, pretty awesome.
- We paid $10 for a Pastis at a rooftop bar in downtown LA.
- We tried weed for the first time; it's good.
- Long Beach was the craziest show we played.
- A kid was shining a laser pointer in Fresno during our set so we stopped playing.

MRR: What occupies your time back in Paris outside of the band?
We do a lot of sports, mostly carrying stuff. I think being in good shape is important when you are in a rock band. Besides Rixe, Wattie goes to Disneyland often, Tom spends a lot of time cleaning his place, and I'm trying to become a skinhead but my mom doesn't want me to.

MRR: What do you enjoy most about touring and what are your plans when you get back home?
A tour is all about meeting others, connections, sharing, supporting, moments, faces, driving, sleeping, eating and playing music. You know, this unique feeling when you pack your stuff and you see people going home with a smile—that can't bring you down. When we get back home we will probably go back to normal life I guess? Well, music is what keeps us alive so we'll probably work hard on the band and try to write a good LP. It was a pleasure to give an interview for *MRR*. America, see you again soon, the frogs will return!

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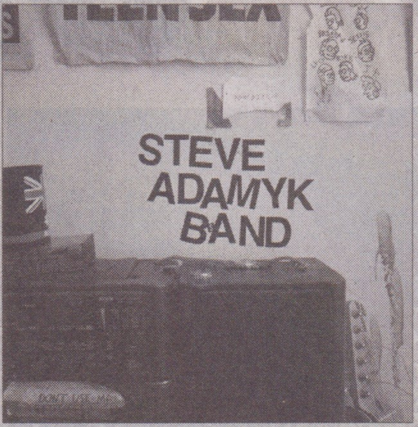
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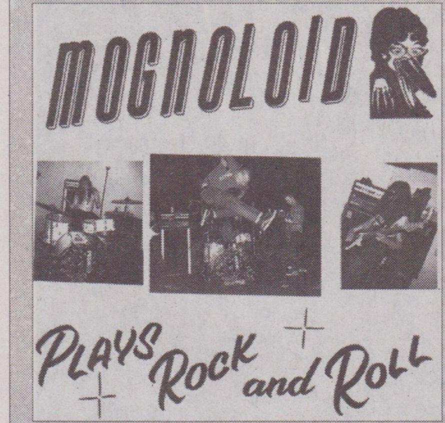
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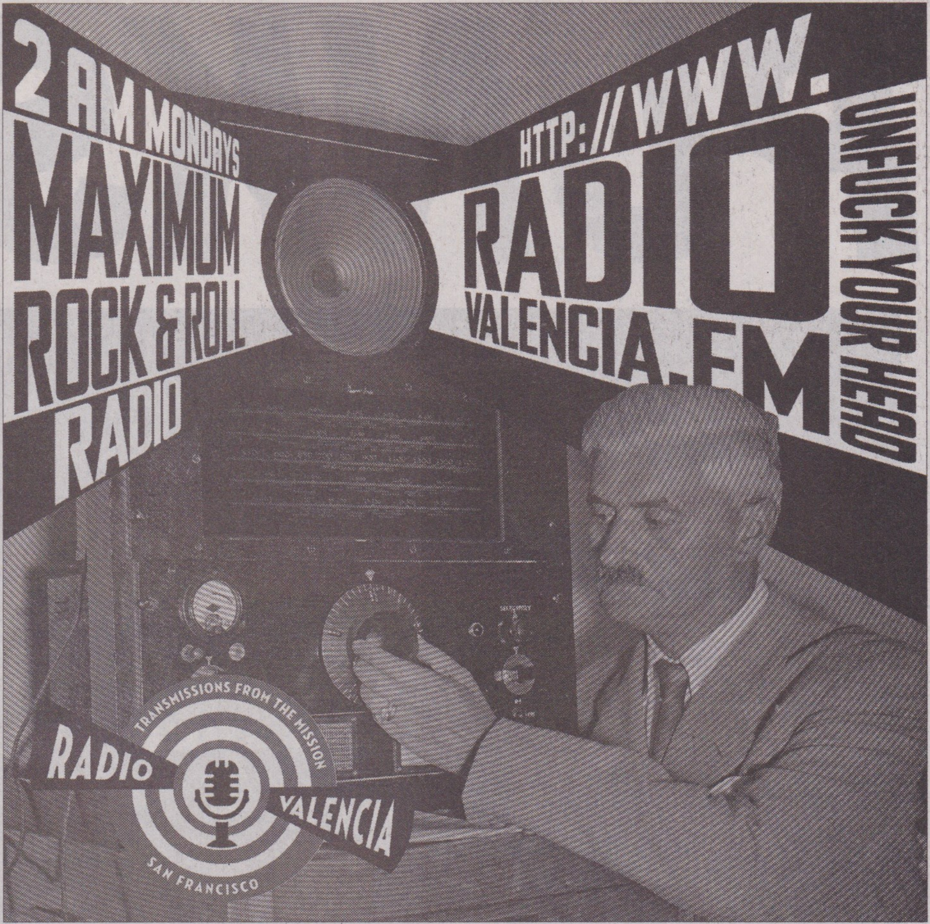
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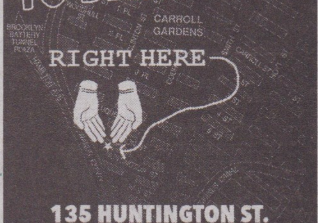
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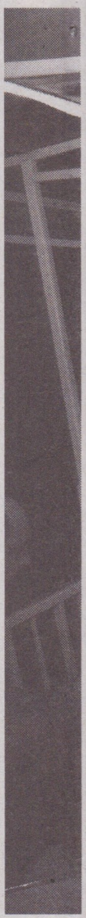

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Interview and introduction by Rose Lewis. Photos provided by Aaron Tuller and Jodi Darby. Lithics is Aubrey Hornor: guitar and vocals, Bob Desaulniers: bass, Wiley Hickson: drums, Mason Crumley: guitar.

The oft-misattributed maxim that writing about music is like dancing about architecture has never seemed more appropriate to me than when I think about Lithics. In attempting to describe their intricately interlocking guitar lines, or their solid foundations of drums and bass, I find myself reaching for metaphors from the realms of metalwork and sculpture. I spoke to them at a bar near their practice space about songwriting, ceramics, No Wave, and snakes.

MRR: How did the band begin?
Bob: It was a mutual friend's idea to play with Aubrey, Wiley, and I. We were all just buddies. We didn't even really think about it being like a real serious thing or anything like that. But she went off to college and then the three of us just kept writing and eventually our friend ended up not wanting to do it so Aubrey took over on vocals and it just kinda turned into a real band.
Aubrey: I thought I would just be playing guitar so it was a big leap for me to sing and be the only guitarist, so we asked Mason to play guitar too.

MRR: Was there ever a time when you thought that you would not play guitar and just sing?
Aubrey: No, I wanted to play guitar, because that's kind of how it started, and we had a bunch of songs already that I had written on guitar, but I didn't feel very experienced because I had only previously played more of a supplemental slide guitar in my other band, so to sing and have all guitar responsibility felt like a lot.

MRR: Where did the slide idea come from?
Aubrey: I don't know! I guess the Contortions, or something, but I just found one and started messing with it.

MRR: It just appeared in your life at the right moment. Cool.
Bob: Well, especially if you're new to playing guitar, a slide is kind of like a way to do cool sounding things that don't take a lot of technical ability.
Aubrey: Right, I think that's sort of what happened. I was messing around on guitar and it was like "this doesn't sound that good," and then I put on a slide and I was like, "this sounds *really* good."
Bob: You can get so shrill. You can go way higher up.
Aubrey: I had a tone in mind that was very shrill and then that gave me the ability to get really, really high and shrill. Mason and I were in an old band called Formica Man, and our old bandmate Eddy played drums, but he had a delay pedal, and we set up that tone together. I just played with it a lot and that became the sound I was going for, something that sounded really like not a good tone, but like a *BWOOIING*. But it just comes from having a quick delay setting and being unsettlingly shrill.

MRR: Did you have a larger stylistic mission in mind when you were starting the band, or were you just taking elements from what you all like and combining them?
Bob: When we first started we never really talked about what we wanted to do. I think maybe subconsciously I was like thinking about Formica Man, and just kind of like "oh yeah, I know what Aubrey sounds like singing," and writing stuff that might be cool with that.
Wiley: We wrote like three songs the first day.

MRR: How does writing songs happen for you?
Bob: We don't have one set way necessarily, I think for most of them it's been improvised, kind of like stuff that we do at practice and then we record it and kinda flesh it out later.
Aubrey: We record everything and then we go back and listen to our practices and find the cool moments and build songs around them. And sometimes we work on stuff at home together and bring it to the band.
Bob: I guess I'm more of a guitar player than a bass player and I know that I've been sitting around the house playing guitar and Aubrey will be like "oh wait I like that" and I'll just stop and kind of turn it into something so I feel like it's a pretty open band as far as people writing parts. Wiley [who plays drums] wrote a guitar part for our newest song. We have a lot of bathroom break jams that happen.
Aubrey: That's how one became a song, because Wiley wrote something on guitar when I was in the bathroom or something like that. [*laughing*]

MRR: Wiley, do you play instruments besides drums in other bands?
Wiley: I've never played another instrument in a band, always drums. I like to play the guitar when I'm laying on my back in bed, but I don't have an amp, and I always like playing bass when it's sitting around too but I would not be able to jam, you know? I don't really understand the concept of "string jamming."

MRR: I also can't really jam. I play guitar and I stick to patterns.
Mason: I don't feel like I could in a different band, really. What I'm doing is the sound of me trying to jam.
Aubrey: We'll just try stuff for a really long time that sounds just horrendous, because I still don't technically know how to play guitar. I just do what sounds good to me, so it'll be really bad for a while, and then I'll find something that works.
Bob: It's weird that that's a novel approach to guitar, like "do something that sounds good to you." It should be how everybody plays!

MRR: It's so easy for it to become so codified; you learn your basic little bit of "one – four – five!" and then suddenly all of your songs sound like the Ramones.
Aubrey: Yeah, you're supposed to know how to play guitar if you're going to play it in a band, and I've never felt that that was true.

MRR: Right. I feel like that's a very kind of No Wave way of thinking about it, and I know you were mentioning the Contortions earlier, so is that a legacy that you relate to?
Aubrey: No, that's not what we were really trying to do with the band, I think that maybe it gave me the idea to try a slide in my old band, but it's not really where we are drawing from too much.

Bob: I love all that stuff, but I don't know if I'd really want our band to be like a No Wave revival or anything. I don't really believe in those kind of movements, you know?

MRR: "We're gonna pick a style from the past and then make our band, today, be that style"?
Bob: People are really good at just nailing a certain thing really well, and I think we kinda have nods to different things in our music but we're not that dogmatic about what we choose to reference. We don't really talk about it, we just kinda play music. It's not really a super conscious thing direction-wise other than just playing together and seeing what sounds good.

MRR: So Aubrey and Mason were in Formica Man; what other bands have various of you been in at whatever points, and do you feel like that informs your current band or not?
Wiley: Not really for me, as far as informing the band, but, I was in a band called Nucular Aminals for a long time and I'm in a band called Landlines now.

MRR: You think that in general they're like pretty different from this?
Wiley: Pretty different, yeah. It's hard to say… I guess there's just a different structure for writing in all those bands. I think mostly that sort of informs what comes up but yeah, I don't know. In Landlines, we almost don't write songs, we just play it once and then they're kinda done. There are Lithics songs too where they've started out just kinda one jam and it's pretty much stayed that way, but there's more of a discussion about different arrangements.
Mason: I used to be in a hardcore band called the Cysts.
Bob: The Cysts *rule*! I love the Cysts!
Mason: I guess we were kinda more of the Flipper-y, weird, out-of-tune, really *hard* sounding…hardcore band. But I've generally played bass in other bands and I played bass in Formica Man.

MRR: How did you decide to make a leap to the guitar?
Mason: I had bought a guitar, just thinking "I'm not in any bands right now, the ideas for songs that I'm having seem to be more guitar based, so I want to spend money on a guitar for some reason." And then a couple months later Aubrey was like "Do you want to be in this band?"

MRR: That worked out really well!
Bob: Well, we were going over to Mason's house for a movie night and I saw a guitar in the TV room.
Mason: Whoa. I didn't know that.
Bob: So it was like "Why doesn't Mason play guitar?" And I didn't know that you didn't actually play guitar.
Wiley: "Mason's got a guitar! Why doesn't Mason play guitar?"

MRR: So kind of two…non-guitarists.
Bob: Yeah, it worked out very well with this chemistry.
Aubrey: Well I've played drums since I was like sixteen, and so I always thought I was a drummer, but I haven't played drums in a pretty long time.
Bob: Aubrey's drumming *rules*!
Wiley: She's an amazing drummer
Aubrey: Not really anymore, but thank you, guys. I think I sort of play guitar in a rhythmic way, because I played drums for so long that's the train of thought.

Bob: I've played in a lot of bands, I'm in a band called Hornet Leg, they've been around for a long time, and I played in a band called Psychic Feline before this one that was my main band for a while, but I guess our sound is kind of like a weird intersection between all of our previous bands. I always wanted to be in a band that practiced five days a week but since that never happened I just could find five different bands that practiced once a week.

MRR: How did you all come to be in Portland?
Aubrey: I'm from Arizona and I came here on tour with an old band and saw it for one day in the summer when it was beautiful and thought it was amazing. I moved here in 2007, but I just couldn't believe all the plants everywhere, especially coming from the desert.

MRR: Yeah! I'm from Colorado and I had a very similar moment, like "there's a fern growing on a tree!"
Aubrey: I couldn't believe it—the diversity of plant life here is so beautiful. And then a bunch of friends, we all decided to move here.
Bob: I moved here in 2007 also, from Boston. My ex-girlfriend's band was moving here and I kinda was in a rut there so I just decided to go along. Interesting choice.
Mason: I grew up in California, Orange County, and I went to Lewis and Clark.
Wiley: I moved from San Francisco in 2007. I had a couple friends who had moved here and I would also visit them in the summer and it was such a magical time. San Francisco was becoming increasingly annoying and impossible to play music in. I had a practice space in Oakland and it would take like an hour and a half to get there and nobody would want to play music anyway. It kind of felt like a very closed-off scene for music and art. It was just impossible. This is more of a visual art town, it seemed like at the time anyway. As soon as I moved up here I met a couple people just playing shows every night of the week. It seemed like fun.

MRR: Yeah! So, you [Wiley] mentioned visual art and I know you [Aubrey] make ceramics; do you all have visual art things? Some of you? Tell me about them.
Aubrey: Bob did all the collage work on our album cover.
Bob: I have nothing to say about that.

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MRR: Nothing to say about collage. OK.
Bob: No, it's a fun thing. I probably would never have used it for anything like that but Aubrey's been very supportive.
Aubrey: Well, he makes them all the time, and he has a huge series going and there are all these really amazing ones.
Bob: I guess I never really thought about it as something I could show to anyone. I just kinda wing it, and it's this gratifying, calm thing to do. Aubrey and I collaborated on the cover, and she took some pieces that I worked on and kind of arranged them and that gave me a panic attack.
Aubrey: I started making ceramics a few years ago and I got really into it and then I got a studio about a year ago. I started out doing small-scale sculpture and I'm kind of coming back to doing more sculpture again. My art process is sort of a similar approach and aesthetic to my musical process.

MRR: I see that! I see that, just having looked at your work and heard your work.
Wiley: I doodle a lot.
Aubrey: It's a little more than that!
Wiley: It's not much more than that though. I work on a couple more serious doodles with my brother a couple times a year.
Aubrey: And they make a calendar!
Wiley: Yeah, we make a calendar. My brother has this machine that makes *shit* look *cool*.

MRR: I want one of those, that sounds great!
Aurbey: It's a Risograph.

MRR: So he puts your doodles through the Risograph and then…?
Wiley: Yeah, we kind of send them back and forth and cut 'em up and collage 'em into these separate little compositions. I don't do as much of it as I used to, I guess mostly I focus on music these days.

MRR: Do you find that there's some sort of like interconnection between the two processes or is it just totally different worlds?
Wiley: Yeah, maybe so, there's a little bit of sideways-ness to it, both approaches. It's hard to put my finger on that exactly. The way I draw is a little bit like the way I approach the drums.
Mason: I would agree with that.

MRR: So, I feel like we've talked about music, we've talked about doodle stuff; where do your lyrics come from? Do you have themes that you talk about or that you like to zero in on? Aubrey, are you the lyrics person?
Aubrey: Yes. I write down a lot of decontextualized phrases in my notebook or abstractions of imagery or feelings. When I am looking for lyrics, I tend to go through my notebooks and piece together these things. It is sort of a sculptural process. And other times my lyric writing is very process-based, where I improvise the phrasing at practice with nonsense non-words and then listen back to recordings of that and insert words that it sounds like I'm saying.

MRR: Have you ever approached the idea of writing a song thinking like "This is an idea I've been kicking around in my head that I would like to write a song about that"?
Aubrey: Sometimes when I'm reading I'll come across a line that I'll write down, or I'll use something

that's been on my mind, but just sort of as a prompt for a direction in a way. In general, I'm going for something less revealing and more absurd. And there are a couple songs I wrote when we were in Australia, where I just based them on what I was seeing around me.

MRR: I think my favorite lyric is *"Hey handsome,"* from the song "Labor." I think that's great, I just really like that.
Aubrey: That's something that Bob's mom said!
Bob: My mom wrote me a letter and that was how it opened and Aubrey and I were talking about the phrasing of a song that turned out to be "Labor" so I was like "what if there was just something here?" and she says "well what?" Then I read out the letter just as an example and we kept it. I dunno, it was my mom! That's a nice thing to say to your son though, right?

MRR: I think so! How did it fit in thematically with the rest of the song?
Bob: Well, later there's "Hey stupid." My mom didn't say that.
Aubrey: Thematically, it doesn't necessarily go with the rest. The lyrics are very loosely about work and we tacked on these phrases as a goof. These are the lyrics: *"Hasty business / A reflection of you / With the effort you do / Which you write rote labor / Taming yourself / When you've been through the loom / It's a habit you know? / For you to write rote labor / Hey handsome / Hey stupid"*

MRR: How did you happen to go to Australia?
Aubrey: It's this weird and cool plane ticket thing that I get through my work. I feel like I have to use it every year even though it's hard to actually go on vacation and not get paid during that time, but it's a great deal, and I wanted to do the most expensive plane ticket possible and that might be it.
Wiley: Didn't you write most of those lyrics there?
Bob: Like "African Mask."
Aubrey: "African Mask" was about a plant that was there, a gigantic alocasia plant that's also called an African Mask. All the plant life there was gigantic. Worth noting.

MRR: You know a lot about plants!
Aubrey: No, no.
Bob: The only person who's used the word "variegated" in a song!
Aubrey: The plant life there looks prehistoric and just totally insane and tropical where we were in North Queensland. Lots of crazy birds, I love birds, and so we did a lot of birding. We saw a bird attack a snake in a tree, and the snake jumped out of the tree!
Bob: We both yelled when it happened! I was filming it on my phone or something.
Aubrey: The snake used its middle muscles in this insane jump out of the tree. It was the coolest thing I've ever seen.
Mason: It leaped to get away from the bird?
Aubrey: Yeah! And it got away! And it was really long. It was, I dunno, a four or five foot snake or something.

MRR: I am not the biggest fan of snakes and the idea that they might jump at me is really worrying.
Wiley: That's messed up.
Bob: They just jump out of the way of things, though. They wouldn't jump *at* you. They'd jump out of the way of a bird.
Mason: They would be pissed if they hit a person after they jumped out of a tree.
Aubrey: I mean, have you ever seen an albino corn snake though? It's so pretty. I've never owned a snake but I think they're cool and beautiful. We have a song called "The Snake."
Wiley: We should get the band a snake for the practice room!
Aubrey: There's one at Pets on Broadway now, it's an albino corn snake and it's the size of my pinky.
Wiley: Perfect! That's the perfect size for what we got.
Aubrey: I think they get a lot bigger.

MRR: What do those eat? Insects or mice?
Bob: Put this in the interview: "pinky mice."

MRR: What other active bands do you like? In Portland and beyond.
Bob: In Portland and beyond? Oh jeez. There's a lot actually. I feel like when we started playing shows and getting contacted by other bands, I was exposed to a lot more contemporary bands that I really like, like the World and Rays in San Francisco, they're really good.

MRR: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah! I love all of those people, mostly Alexa, but also by extension everybody associated with her.
Aubrey: That Uranium Club Band, they were so rad.
Bob: Uranium Club is the shit. And Sneaks, from Washington, DC, is one of my favorite new things. I love Odwalla 88, it's probably the most original music I've heard in a very long time. They played in Portland at [house venue] Human Flesh Body World not too long ago and Aubrey and I went. It's the kind of music that it's hard to imagine how people can write that. It's wonderful. They're great. From Portland, we have all our friends' bands, Woolen Men obviously, Landlines, Honey Bucket, Mope Grooves…
Aubrey: Cat Mummies at the Louvre.
Bob: Cat Mummies at the Louvre! Pee Yew, Cat Hoch Band, Wave Action, Bobby Peru, Tyrants, Ex Debs.
Aubrey: Oh, and the band Patsy from New Orleans featuring my dear friend Candice Metrailer.
Bob: Oh yeah, we like CCTV too.
Aubey: Yes. *Yes!* I just listened to that 7" a whole bunch of times in a row.

MRR: Do you have a particular kind of venue that you like to play?
Bob: Yeah, I prefer to play small places. We like to play all ages shows, DIY spaces. It's fine to play established venues also though.
Mason: We'd never played a house show until our last show and it was so good!
Aubrey: It was fun, it was so much more relaxed, we played so much better.
Bob: It was cool to play at the American Legion, it was cool to play at the Sons of Haiti Hall, on Mississippi. We prefer to play places like that when it's possible, and luckily in Portland it seems like there's still opportunities to do that. Playing [small Greek restaurant] Marina's that one time was really great. While we're in our own town, if those are the shows that we can do, we prefer to do that, and then out of town it's not in our control.

Lithics recently released an LP,
Borrowed Floors, *now in its second pressing.*
Listen and get it: lithics.bandcamp.com.

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In the almost ten years I've known Scoia, we've often fantasized about a band that could make punk music in Italy fun again. It all seemed to sound trite and boring and serious, and even though we played in our own bands, we were never fully satisfied with the results. Now Scoia sings in Hallelujah! and we seem to have finally found The Band That Makes Punk Fun Again.

Italy wasn't prepared for their debut one-sided 12", which came out at the end of last year on their own label, Depression House. Music fans all over the Boot are running around like chickens whose heads got cut off by the razor-sharp guitar riffs contained therein. Everybody seems to love them but at the same time it feels like nobody really gets them. Their songs are dirty, mean, sarcastic and meant to annoy the hell out of squares through massive feedback, the absence of discernible vocals, inept synth-bashing and pummeling monotone rhythms. They're inspired by their own basic instincts and frustration. Live, they don't care for stages: Scoia cuts through the crowd holding his makeshift contact mic, pressing it on stuff and people in order to provoke feedback—both in the sense of sound and of physical responses from the audience. The rest of the band thrashes around to the relentless beat of the drums and the trance-like one-note bass lines while the guitar chews up hardcore riffs before spitting them out a contorted mess.

I got together with three quarters of the band plus Sofia (Scoia's partner in Depression House) over pizza and beer and we had a nice chat about their place in the Italian scene, their vision for the band, and what life is like in the shittiest corners of Northern Italy. Laura and Mirco (drums and guitar) live in isolated postcard-towns among the Alps, Federico and Scoia (bass and vocals / synth) live in the swamps just south of Verona, home of Romeo and Juliet, the Grabbies, and the craziest soccer hooligans in the country.

Praise the Lord, readers of MRR: I give you Hallelujah!

NOTE: Expressions like "dio porco," "dio can" and "dio boia" are idioms used locally to express anger, or simply to emphasize certain phrases or concepts. They are impossible to translate, so I left them as they were because I felt they gave a certain personality to the interview. They roughly translate as various insults to god.

MRR: When and how did you start playing together?

Scoia: Laura and I met because I played some shows in her area with my older band [noise punk crazy duo Virus]. She wanted to start a band and thought I was the right guy to ask.

Laura: Everybody around where I live has a different way of approaching music. Over-rehearsed and over-thought. He seemed like a guy who shared my idea of just letting go and playing whatever we came up with.

Fede: We started a year and a half ago, more or less. I was the last one to join, two days later.

Scoia: We'd already written five or six songs by then!

MRR: Where does the name come from?

Scoia: "Hallelujah! I've finally found a new band!"

MRR: Did it click immediately between you? How were the beginnings?

Fede: Yeah, consider that on the record there are recordings from the third or fourth month of playing. Like stuff recorded in September, and we'd started practicing in the summer.

Laura: Instinct is key for us. We don't like working on the songs too much, we just let it out. We're not even very good players...

Scoia: Mirko [guitar] is the only one who can play his instrument. He couldn't be here with us because his girlfriend lives in Madrid. She's almost as tall as he is. He's very tall.

MRR: What's your musical background? How did you get into punk?

Scoia: I didn't start going to shows until I was in my early twenties. I'd started a band with some friends but we used to play mostly for ourselves. Then we met these guys from the punk rock band Dots. You were one of them. We shared our practice space and drummer with them and then they brought me along on their USA tour, and that made me really get into music. I'd always listened to a lot of different stuff, and I still do, even shit that hasn't got anything to do with what I play like funk, afro-beat, free jazz...

Laura: We all listen to more or less the same things. Funk, Fela Kuti, and foreign underground punk. But I don't have many kindred spirits, musically, where I live. That's why I sought Scoia out to form the band.

MRR: Let's talk about Italy for our American friends. You sound and look and feel like kind of outsiders in the music circuit. You're not punx, you're not garage rockers, you're most definitely not hardcore...

All: That's more or less what we want.

Scoia: Not sure it's actually what we want, but we're comfortable with it.

MRR: But what's your opinion on the Italian scene?

AH!

Introduction, questions, and translation
by Generic Giacomo.
Photos courtesy of the band.

Scoia: I'd say 90% of the bands are shit and 10% I like and even admire.
Laura: That's about right.

MRR: Like who? What about situations, places you feel like home...
Fede: Even home doesn't feel like home.
Scoia: I think we share something with the band Holiday Inn, from Rome. They're the closest thing to cool new stuff in Italy. I also had the opportunity to spend a few days driving on tour with Sang, from Trento, and I have to say they're pretty kick ass.

MRR: You said you're not involved with the scene in Italy, but you do a distro / label called Depression House and Fede runs a recording studio called Dirty Sound Studio.
Scoia: Yeah, I started the label five or six years ago to put out stuff from my bands and my friends' bands. Sofia helps me run it. It's a very small operation. We're very careful not to lose money—we usually don't do more than one record a year.
Fede: The studio has nothing to do with the music I play. We just use it as a practice space. I use the studio as little as I can.
Laura: Yeah, we record stuff as if we were in a normal practice space.
Fede: We do everything live to a four-track, even the vocals. It's an instinct thing. I'm a drummer, but I play bass in this band. Laura, vice-versa. It makes things more unpredictable and fun.

MRR: I think there's an element of sarcasm to your sound. You can't make out what the lyrics say, but everything sounds like you're aggressively making fun of everybody. Even the riff on "Red Mestruo" sounds like it's mocking a stereotypical Italian punk'n'roll riff. It's a weird, fun and creepy feeling. It's mock-violent, mock-everything. Am I crazy?
Scoia: If you mean that most of our audience doesn't get what we're trying to do, you're right.
Fede: Nothing wrong with that!
Scoia: Of course. I mean that I'm pretty sure a lot of people don't actually like us or get us, but they still pretend because someone wrote a nice review and now they think they should like us. We're not doing anything new. People treat us like we're something new.
But...I think I haven't understood the question.

MRR: the question is: Italian rock'n'roll music is lame. Same old riffs, same old redneck attitude. When it's good, it's ridiculous. When it's bad, it's machista and boring. Your whole sound and presentation seems to mock this way of understanding punk and rock music, both live and on record. Do you agree? Have you ever noticed this?
Fede: I don't think we do this on purpose.

MRR: Of course, but I think it's the product of what you're constantly exposed to when you go to a lot of shows here. Half of your live show says "fuck you," the other half says "let's have a good time."
Scoia: Look, I'm usually pretty drunk when I'm performing, and I try to have as much fun as I can. If the crowd has fun with me, that's great. If they don't, it's even better because I feed off their negative energy and shoot it back at them.

MRR: Is the audience important?
Laura: Well, it's a concern. Sometimes they contact us and ask us to play at some festival where we're like: "Do they really like us or do they have us confused with someone else? Did we do something wrong?" In Italy, we feel...what do you say Scoia? Help me out here.
Scoia: We don't feel anything. We play, they pay, what do you care if they get us or not?
Fede: If we have to find our identity in the context of Italy, it's hard for us. We do what we do. It's not our fault.
Scoia: You know, there have been bands way worse than this one, like Out With a Bang, that I like of course, but they did their own thing and have been relevant and kicked asses without being affiliated with anybody in Italy. On the contrary, making nothing but enemies! By the way, I'm the only one in Italy who sets up shows for Anus' new band, Caucasoid.

MRR: Since we don't wanna talk about Italy: what are the foreign bands you're looking forward to seeing and what are the ones that should stop coming to Italy?
Laura: I really like Uranium Club, I just discovered them last week.

MRR: They're coming to Europe! Scoia, you were complaining about American bands clogging up bills here in Italy...
Scoia: Yeah, these fucking Americans come here every six months because they get treated so well. Who wants to see their shows four times a year?
Sofia: You're thinking about Dirty Fences, right?
Scoia: Right, I'm fed up with Dirty Fences.

MRR: I get it, the obsession with foreign acts sucks, but we're the first to say we don't like any Italian music.
Scoia: I just want the *good* bands to come over!

MRR: Like who?
Scoia: Homostupids and Puffy Areolas if they hadn't broken up. Destruction Unit can come whenever they want. The show they played at our local venue was so much fun. The singer is crazy. I love them, love their attitude.

MRR: Let's talk about the shows you set up occasionally. How's that working out for you?
Scoia: It's not easy. Everybody's ready to judge you, you have to make everybody happy and be able to get the good bands before other people get them. It's not easy, especially where I live. But sometimes it's worth it, sometimes it's a pain in the ass...but at least if I set up a show I get free drinks even if I'm not playing. Basically I drink for free every weekend. Isn't it great?

MRR: You're always dealing with clubs, though, because in your area there are no good squats or social centers.
Scoia: Who gives a fuck, they might as well die, *dio can*.

MRR: Well, the rest of the punk universe regards them as valuable and precious resources.
Laura: Yeah, but they shut 'em down so fast.
Scoia: We have cool squats in Italy, where they set up great shows. A lot of them, though, are basically clubs where people go to get high and dance to d&b and act like they're better than anybody else.

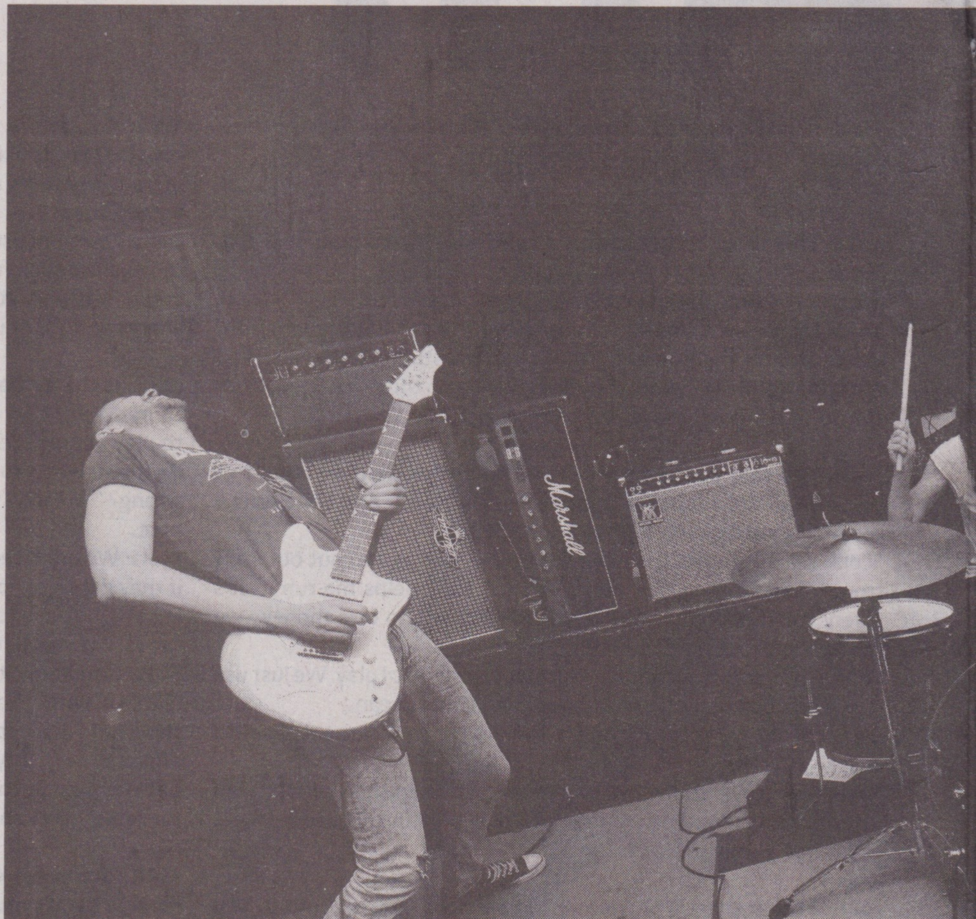
MRR: One thing you don't have to worry about in the shithole towns you live in is gentrification...
Scoia: What?

MRR: Gentrification.
Scoia: The fuck is that?

MRR: It's when a poor neighborhood becomes "cool" and rich assholes start buying property and drive the prices up. You don't have that problem in the middle of the shitfields and in the mountains, where you live...
Scoia: The bar I go to, the average age is 60.

MRR: Help our readers understand what it's like living in the outskirts of Verona or in the mountains of Rovereto.
Laura: Rovereto is just constant complaining, because it's a wealthy little town where nobody's got any real problems.
Scoia: We have fucking tanks. We're the Independent Republic of Veneto. *[He's referring to a nutty far right movement that emerged lately that claims that the region of Veneto has a right to become its own state, like Catalunya or the Basque Country. But unlike these cases, Veneto's claim is completely absurd and based on nothing but hate for "strangers." This hasn't stopped some of these crazy fucks from building a fucking tank and putting on a demonstration where they caused a civil war scare by driving on the streets with this fucking homemade tank. I think you can google this shit to find out more.]*

Where I live, if you look slightly different than the norm, nobody talks to you. I like it. It has its charm. They cast you out, they don't even realize that. If you're not exactly like them, you don't exist.
Sofia: We're all just communist junkies...
Scoia: To be clear, I'm not talking strictly about us. I mean, even the guy in the Pink Floyd t-shirt is a communist junkie. Music in general



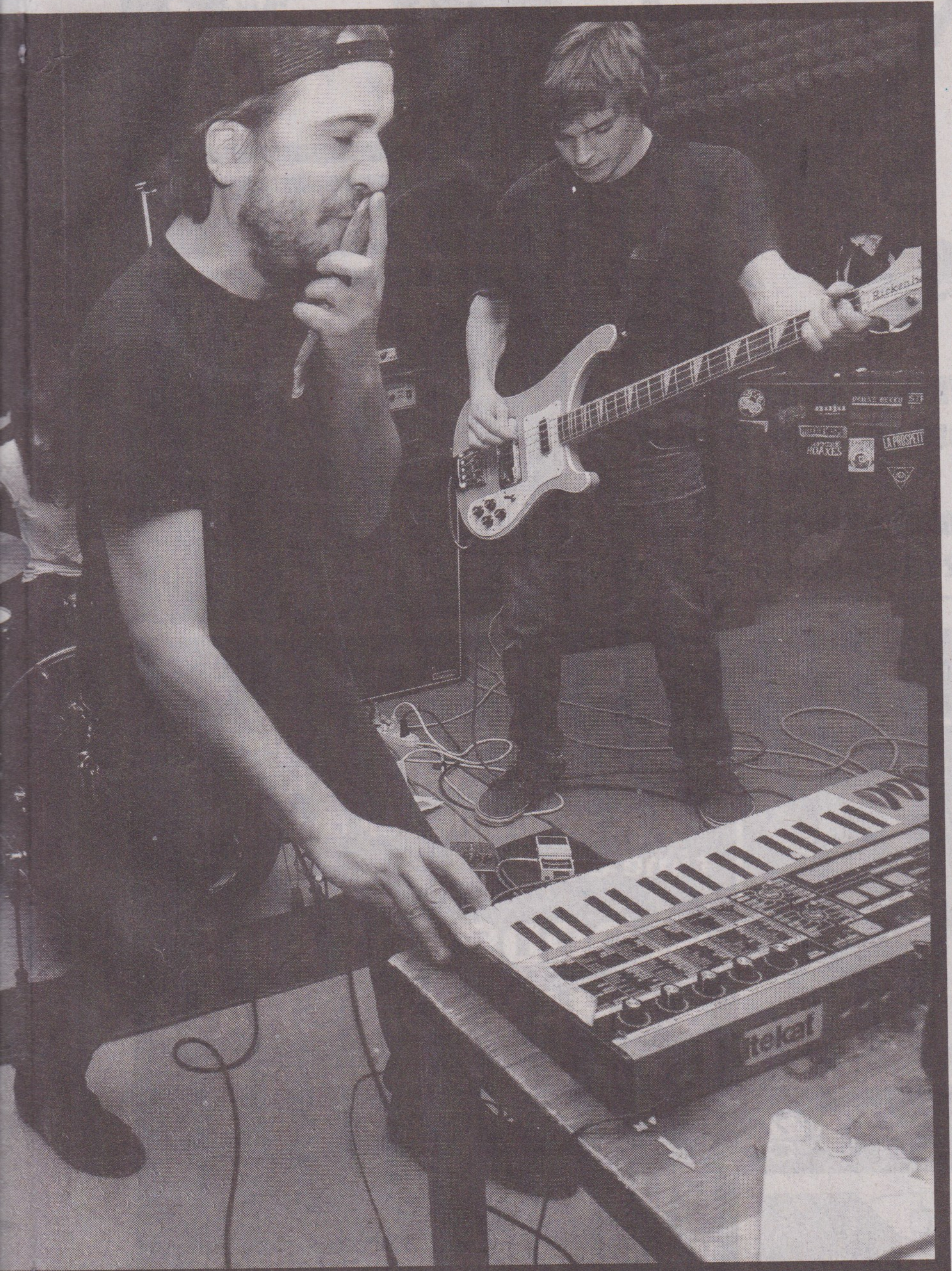
is part of this isolated world. I like it because I like being weird.

MRR: It's kind of at the core of being a punk.

Scoia: That's why I don't care about lyrics in my songs. I'm just used to not communicating and I like it.

Fede: He doesn't care about lyrics in other people's songs either. He just listens to what it sounds like.

Scoia: I can go anywhere. I walk into a club, I don't have to check out what kind of people are there. I'm comfortable with people fucking with me. Verona, for example, has always been considered a racist, xenophobic, right wing town by the media; that's all because of the town's hooligans. I'm fucking sick of this. When you say you're from Verona, people judge you, they say, "Whoa, you're kind of extreme up there." Of course Verona has a shitty side, but it's been blown out of proportion by the media. The fact that I wear a bomber jacket is often a problem, because I'm from Verona.



MRR: Do you wear a bomber jacket to fuck with people?

Scoia: I wear it because I like it! And also because I'm from Verona, *porco dio*. [*laughs*] When I walk into the room and I'm wearing a bomber people kind of freeze. They're already putting a stamp on me. It's a fucking jacket, *porco dio*. It's a jacket, *dio can*. It's 2016, *dio boia*. It's a fucking jacket, *dio boia*. If that's enough for you to want to bust my balls, it means you're a fucking idiot.

MRR: So you have a bad relationship with Verona, but an even worse relationship...

Laura: With the rest of the population! With humanity!

Fede: We're pretty ok with it though.

Scoia: It's fascinating. Verona is a city with a lot of contradictions, sharp cuts.

Sofia: He refers to the fact that the river Adige cuts the city in half, and historically you have the side where the rich and conservative live, and the side where the poor left wing pariahs live.

MRR: And on which side are you gonna open your bar, Scoia?

Scoia: On the rich side, of course! Seriously though, the myth of "fascist Verona" is old. You can't take the right wing nuts seriously, they're just fucking bullies. If you take them seriously you help them instead of harming them. People don't even know why they're fighting anymore. When I worked at the factory, nobody ever went on strike, only because going on strike is "communist shit." They don't even know what they're talking about, they're just bigots, fueled by the media that's been insisting on this shit forever.

MRR: It's nice to see that every band from Verona carries this aura of danger, people always expect you to be these violent assholes...

Laura: Do they? Cool!

Fede: We have our share of smiling nice indie rock bands in Verona.

Scoia: Come visit Verona, it's nice. We have pocket knives.

MRR: So, are you recording new stuff? What's next?

Scoia: Yeah, we're starting to work on the next record. We're also thinking about doing a European tour in late Spring, but we're not sure yet when or with whom. But if someone's interested they can get in touch. Especially German people, because in Germany they don't know shit about music but they really treat you well. Two cases of beer, hotel room... it's like being a rockstar. It's nice when that happens to a shitty band like ours.

MRR: What else do you wanna say to the readers of *MRR*?

Fede: Do you wanna split a pizza with me guys?

Laura: Fuck people who use their parents' money to play music without having to work. Get a fucking job. Or teach me how to not give a fuck.

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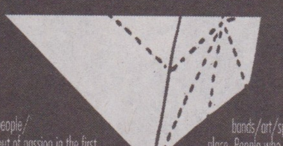

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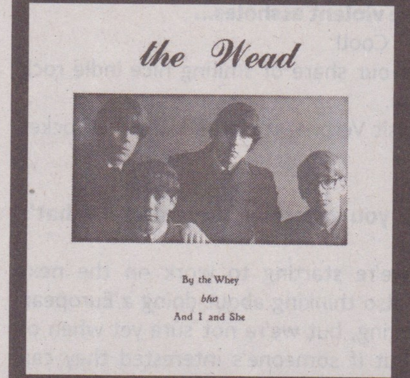

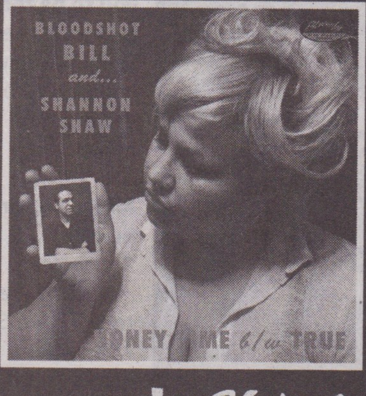

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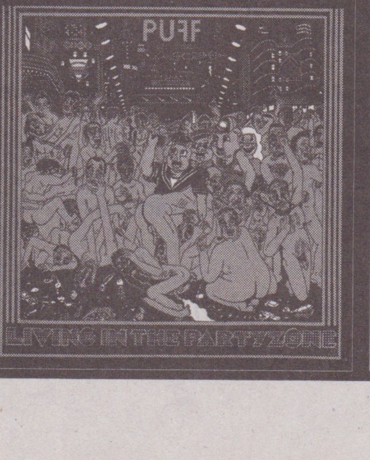

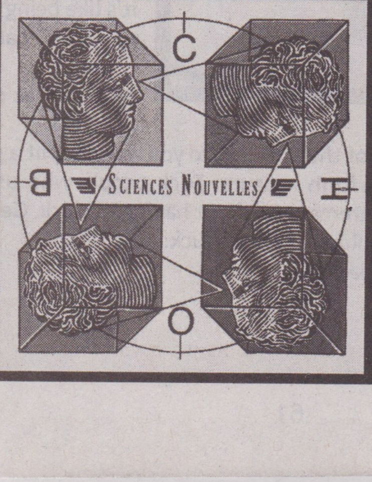

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WEIRDOS HELPING WEIRDOS: NEW ZEALAND'S MELTED ICE CREAM

Melted Ice Cream is a music label / collective started by Joe Sampson in 2011 in Christchurch, New Zealand. Having emerged the same year as the city's devastating earthquakes, the early label worked not just at documenting the local scene in flux but also committed itself to being one of the more prolific conduits in the country, hand-duplicating and hand-distributing every release on cassette. This was a time when in other countries the tape revival had already been labeled a fad. But for MIC, it was a matter of necessity—New Zealand's last vinyl pressing plant closed in 1987, in the depths of the Flying Nun Records era. To legitimize the efforts of the country's newest, most unique underground bands meant putting them out on antiquated, yet cheap, technology. Now, five years into the label, Melted Ice Cream is taking on vinyl for the first time in an expensive yet hopeful continuation of their sub-known mission: to physicalize the oddbeat and the surreal of New Zealand underground music, with every idiosyncracy—tape hiss or vinyl crackle—intact. Erin Kimber talked to Michael McClelland and Brian Feary about what they and Joe Sampson do to keep anybody caring about music from New Zealand.

MRR: Give me the background. How did Melted Ice Cream (MIC) start?
Brian: Joe and I were living together and he announced that he was starting a record label, and that he had got this guy Leo [Buckett] to design a logo for it. From my perspective, in the early days all the label was was a logo and perhaps a vague intention on Joe's part to do something with it. I think he put out a few bootlegs to start with, and then he got the rights to Thrill Collins' *Live At All Plastics* (acquired for a souvlaki and a can of coke), and he also put out the Christchurch music compilation, *Sickest Smashes from Arson City*. Then things started to get a bit more real. He asked me to help out sometime after that compilation for one reason or another…I can't actually remember why, but I sometimes see the point in the label now.
Michael: I remember there was quite a spike of teenagers playing in bands around the start of the decade. It seemed really visible for a while. And a lot of suburban kids, particularly up here in Auckland where the suburbs are really extensive. But Christchurch just as much.

MRR: You had experience playing in bands and putting on shows, right?
Michael: Yeah, organizing DIY shows and badly-managed tours was how a lot of us now-20-somethings first met. When the Christchurch earthquake happened [in February 2011, killing 185 people and destroying most of the city's live music venues, practice rooms, and cheap accommodation], there was a surge of band members who came up to Auckland and moved in with people they'd befriended on tour as teenagers.
Brian: I'd put on a few shows myself in a band called Magic Eye and did a few tours with different bands that I was playing in, and I've been doing a New Zealand music show on [Christchurch student radio station] RDU called *The Sheep Technique* for about five years.
Michael: By the time I met Joe, I was twenty-three and had toured the US a few times, so thankfully had knowledge and connections to put to good use…for example with what ended up being the Salad Boys / Parquet Courts New Zealand tour that happened in 2015.

MRR: Did you model yourself on any other label?
Brian: Not consciously, but being from New Zealand means that I've invested a lot of time reading about / hearing stories about / listening to Flying Nun Records, and have heard mostly

CONFIDENCE MAN

The Ruling
"Cat Set"
Cat Set
motte

horror stories to be honest. I guess we're trying to do something like they did back in the day (putting out and drawing attention to good stuff from New Zealand, to as many ears as possible) without doing what they did back in the day (like not knowing their arse from their elbow).

Michael: We have a tight box to work within. Overseas reviewers have often been quick to jump all over making comparisons to the old stuff, i.e. Flying Nun, just because we're from the same country. And we're hesitant to encourage that. It's a lot more challenging to model ourselves in opposition to taken-for-granted ideas or labels.

Brian: I'm a graphic designer so I'm conscious of how the label should be presented and I believe the likes of Sub Pop have it right with a strong brand and look and feel to their records. I'm a sucker for DIY labels too…little labels who you've never heard of that put so much effort into their releases and push their artists.

Michael: Since all the bands we push tend to be of the weirdo sort, it makes sense for us to facilitate as weirdos helping weirdos.

MRR: Do you have contracts or stated expectations of your artists?

Brian: Nothing that you sign as such. We are putting some blind faith in the artists, to sell stuff on their own accord, but we do what we can too. That's oversimplifying.

Michael: No fake American accents!

MRR: You mostly release on cassette. Are the tapes are self-funded? I heard you are moving in to vinyl releases?

Michael: Civil Union's LP is our first vinyl release after five years of tapes, which feels like a milestone. Then there's Opposite Sex's second LP which we're co-releasing with Dull Tools from New York, and after that there'll be reissues of our Centre Negative and Dance Asthmatics tapes by a US label called ever/never. Transistors are putting out their vinyl through us, and I'd also like to get some 7-inches happening too. The god damn bear is loose!

Brian: The cassettes were mostly funded by Joe to start with, but they look after themselves these days. At this stage, the vinyl is out of our own pockets. Hopefully vinyl will start looking after itself at some point once we've got a few releases out…it's hard to say at the moment.

MRR: How do you do you reach your audience and the rest of the music "industry"?

Michael: This is fucking New Zealand…we're not trying to kid anyone here. I basically just reason that if somebody digs what we do, that'll already be obvious by the fact they bothered to seek it out in the first place.

MRR: You're pretty firmly independent?

Michael: Yeah, but it's hardly a conscious decision. We live in a country that barely gets noticed from afar and most of the culture we interact with is imported from America. In many ways it's not up to us what we're independent from. We were born off the radar anyway.

Brian: There aren't that many labels in New Zealand that scratch the surface of how much good music there is here. If we don't do it, nobody else is gonna. I think what we are doing is in some small way exposing stuff that wouldn't be heard otherwise to international audiences.

Michael: Which is an audience it's also important not to pander to either. It's worth remembering what you're independent *from*, which I think is worth thinking about especially as New Zealanders in an American world.

MRR: And the musicians on your label pretty much feel the same way?

Michael: I doubt many of them care. *[laughs]* Which is fine. If we insisted entirely on bands that agreed with us, we wouldn't have anything to release. There are great bands here, but not many bands overall. What's important is the content. If you take a look at the music you'll see a common thread of weird-minded outsider types. Lyrically, all the music we've put out tends to be pretty self-deprecating, whether in a funny way or not. I'd say absurdism and

melted ice cream since twenty eleven
mic.

CONFIDENCE MAN
T5

extremist tendencies tend to be what distinguish the bands more than any ideological hunch. It tends to get pretty dark, which often reflects everybody's mental health at the time.

Brian: We just go for stuff that we are keen on…whisper about it to each other, see what the others think, see if it works with our ideals. Is it good enough, does it fit with our sound? Is it creative? And then if we are into it, we'll whisper it to the artist and see if we can get them keen too.

Michael: I think individuality counts the most. If you're an interesting person, your music will be interesting. This tends to mean we work with who we know.

MRR: That kind of approach can lead to things being kind of a clique though. How do you make sure you have a diverse group of artists? Do you give that much thought?

Brian: There aren't that many bands about in Christchurch and not that many band members to go around, so we often find ourselves playing in multiple bands. Therefore certain ideas and influences will become apparent.

Michael: We'd definitely like it to not be a club. New Zealand is small enough as it is. Since MIC is from Christchurch, the label's obviously gonna try reflect the output of that scene. But I would actually defend our efforts at reaching out to people outside the "club." We constantly email about bands around the country that have randomly come to our attention, such as Invisible Threads or Opposite Sex. Sure, we may have history with individual members, but we're music nerds first and foremost so that interest in new stuff (and backgrounds!) always comes first.

MRR: I understand you're actively trying to get more women on the label?

Michael: Man there is such a great history of non-dude musicians here in Auckland (Ducklingmonster, the Coolies / Piece War / CUTSS, Blistex 5000, the Biscuits, and a shitload more). Since non-dominant, non-normative culture produces the best art, it just makes sense to promote that. Duh. There'll be more non-dudes on MIC this year for sure.

MRR: You all make music. Tell me about the bands you are in.

Michael: Bands interbreed a lot here. Most people in our scene play in a few different bands. Joe Sampson plays in three (T54, Salad Boys, the Dance Asthmatics). I'm in two: Centre Negative and Team Ugly, the latter of which was how I first came into contact with the label. Perry from Civil Union, whose LP we've just released, has played in like ten goddamn bands, including mine. Actually I think of the like seven members I have in Centre Negative, everyone's played in at least a few. Shit, Beth Dawson / Ducklingmonster probably holds the record, she's been in like fifteen.

Brian: I'm a "band dick," one of those guys that's in too many bands, for no apparent reason. My current bands are the Dance Asthmatics (drummer), X-Ray Charles (singer / guitarist), Wurld Series (drummer), Brian Tamaki and the Kool Aid Kids (drummer). There aren't that many drummers willing or capable of playing gigs in Christchurch. I'm not even that good, and I'm not sure why I play in so many bands apart from the fact that I like doing it. X-Ray Charles is my songwriting and guitar band, but it's kinda on the backburner at the moment while I'm drumming in a bunch of bands and recording and doing audio production for other stuff like the Wurld Series album that should be done sometime this year.

MRR: Is there a MIC grand plan for the future? Anything you want to tick off the to-do list?

Michael: Yeah, if the wider world showed any renewed interest in music from New Zealand, or, god, even the same amount of interest they're paying to Australia right now, that would be pretty satisfying.

That's why we're reaching out a bit more with tours and vinyl and the like. More overseas bands touring here too! God…we sometimes put on tours. Contact us. Contact us. Contact us.

meltedicecreamier.tumblr.com

CHARLES HAYWARD of THIS HEAT

This Heat formed in the mid 1970s as punk waves were beginning to wash up on either side of the Atlantic. While many higher-profile bands formed around the same period were influenced by, and developed the now familiar punk ideas of overtly anti-establishment rhetoric and "back-to-basics" musicianship, the three members of This Heat, Charles' Bullen and Hayward, and Gareth Williams more subtly incorporated aspects of punk music and culture into a unique blend of music, equally inspired by the techniques and sounds of experimental composers such as Stockhausen and Germany's Krautrock bands as it was punk. This Heat's music seemingly managed to incorporate compositional techniques and structure more akin to visual art than many of their contemporaries and in doing so influenced many future musicians and artists.

Releasing two LPs. 1977's this heat and 1982's Deceit in addition to the Health and Efficiency EP in 1980, their sound was creative, challenging and complex but far-removed from the perceived ego-driven musical indulgence that some felt had dominated the 1970s. The themes in Deceit in particular address a number of societal concerns of the time that still resonate today. Their work remain difficult to confine to a genre incorporating and pioneering a wide variety of instruments and sounds into their music and rejecting mainstream production norms in favor of new organic approaches developed in their Cold Storage studio in Brixton, South London.

Recently reforming for a few concerts in London, and with their records reissued and remastered by Light in the Attic earlier this year MRR Kalou talked to Charles Hayward about his thoughts on making music past, present, and future.

Interview and introduction by Kalou.

MRR: What brought about the recent reissues of the This Heat catalogue?
Light In The Attic approached us, they're a company specializing in re-issues, they do it all to very high standard and gave us all the space we wanted. Charles Bullen and I re-mastered at Metropolis with Tony Cousins, who's a great engineer and who worked with us on the music originally.

MRR: How have you found the reception to the reissues and gigs?
Overwhelming, so much love for the music, great reviews which seem to "get it" so much more than journalists did when we made it and incredible enthusiasm from the audience. There's the people our age come back for more and there's the new young maniacs who weren't even born when we made it and that's just opened things right out. I've been working over the past few years with some of this new wave—Gnod, Barberos, Dalek, Housewives—and connected with their audiences so the whole thing has brought us all together and it's for real.

MRR: How has it been playing the This Heat songs again?
When we started rehearsing I had this weird visualization of a country road, up ahead there's a signpost, standing around leaning on it are four or five people. As I approach I realize that they are the This Heat songs. "Where have you been? We've

been waiting for you." That's what they said. Plus there's this whole "History repeats itself" thing going on, it was there when we made it and now we're inside it, irony in its true sense.

MRR: When did you initially become interested in creating your own music?
When I was about eleven or twelve, although really that was the first time it had become turned into words, from my thoughts. When I was very young I played a duet with a thunderstorm on the piano and really felt it was really genuine. I'd already been learning Bach and all that sort of stuff—and yet this thunderstorm thing wasn't anything like that. I was just using the piano as a sound generator. I felt really connected.

MRR: Did you decide early on that you wanted to work with sound as a career?
I had decided. People didn't want me to do that; they wanted me to have something to fall back on and to have a "proper job" and stuff. I knew what I wanted to do, I told people what I wanted to do, and they made it impossible for me to do that so I carried on anyway, but in a more sub-diffused way. It became allied to rebellion, and it became allied to autonomy and a sort of self-didactic self-teaching thing. I gave up piano lessons when I was about eleven or twelve, I had a couple of drum lessons, and I was in the school choir and the school orchestra. I blagged my way through the school orchestra—I was remembering what I knew from piano lessons. I gave up all music education really by the time I was about fourteen because I thought, "I'm not going to let them tell me about this, they're only going to tell me what they want me to know, I want to know what they don't want me to know." It became sort of very rebellious and sort of a secret world actually. I knew I was moving towards this thing and I was keeping it to myself. It's quite aggressive actually, quite single-minded, flat refusal.

MRR: I know you experimented with tape loops early on—I'm curious to know how you got into doing that. You don't only have to have the intentions but the resources as well.
I got into having an agenda of creativity, quite young and my younger brother did too. My parents supported that. All I ever got, and all I ever bought, and all I ever saved for was musical equipment. After a while I started buying records, which felt at first like an indulgence because all I was buying was musical equipment. I bought my first album way after I got my first really good snare drum.

MRR: What prompted you to come up with techniques you employed in making music?
That's the project really. Sometimes it gets crazy like with This Heat, where every single song is a proposal for a new way of making things. It's very hard work but it's fantastic hard work—I'm not running away from it. That's what we were trying to do.

MRR: How did This Heat first gain exposure?
This is in the days when you'd phone someone up in their department, with their desk in front of them and they would have cassettes, ten or twelve piles of them. Part of our strategy was to get this blue and yellow thing going at the beginning and to actually have a cassette where the spine and everything about it was blue and yellow We hassled and hassled [John] Peel like crazy and got on his nerves and his producer John Walters, we really got on their wick. In the end they listened to us just to shut us up, but the way we could facilitate that was because of this blue and yellow tape, very identifiable, like a trademark.

MRR: This Heat were signed to Rough Trade early on. Was it more avant-garde back then?
It was, back then it was just ridiculous. For a little period of time it was just incredible. We'd already made a record before Rough Trade; *Blue and Yellow* was on David Cunningham's label, Piano. *Heath and Efficiency* was half between Piano, the label and Rough Trade. It was a sort of co-production. In fact, in a weird sort of way Rough Trade was the kiss of death, because after that it just all fell apart really. It's not related to Rough Trade particularly but suddenly there was more pressure, not from them but in our heads, about playing more.

MRR: Did they want you to play to a bigger audience and gain a bigger fan-base?
Charles: Well we wanted. For me the big debate has always been; I'd rather sign to a label that sold say, 50,000 records and get 10% of the money than have a company sell 10,000 and I get 50%. The bottom line is I'd get more money in the second deal but I'd communicate with less people. I really do think the real thing is just making it so you can communicate with people.

MRR: So, you wouldn't mind signing to a major label if it meant communicating with more people.
Ah, that's the thing. It's a question of what you communicate.

MRR: ...if you maintained artistic control?
I can't really see a problem with that except it won't happen. That's the only problem I can see.

MRR: Speaking of communicating, I read some that much of *This Heat*'s music has illusions to war?
I have a problem with symbolism. It's not really that the songs are symbolic - it's that the songs are the songs. And that's that. We tried to address areas like watching and being watched on a domestic level or falling asleep on a mass cultural level.

MRR: What's the story behind *Sleep* (from *Deceit*)?
A large amount of the lyrics are taken from adverts: *"softness is a thing called comfort," "never forget you have a choice," "success on a plate for you."* It might be the Co-op [UK-based neighborhood supermarket chain] or something, I can't remember. *"Success on a plate for you"* is either *Birds Eye* or *Findus* [pre-packaged fish producers]. It was

like "go to sleep," here's the stuff [the commercials] that's making you go to sleep. It wasn't sleep like "sleep, sleep"—it was sleep like a TV as hypnosis, a cultural sleep.

MRR: What relevance do you think the ideas in *This Heat's* music have to today's world; in terms of being watched and being lured into a cultural sleep?

Well it's what I can see all around me and that's what people are telling me, too, and it was on the way even when we originally made the music, so we've all had plenty of warning, not that we did anything about it. The technology is leading us now, it always has really, the wheel, the printing press, the combustion engine, and these have all changed us and how we organize. In the long run I'm optimistic, because the technology also implies the end of money, and when that kicks in everything will really change. It's just a question of getting to that place in one piece.

MRR: What importance do you place on sequencing songs on your records?

It's like a film, a song is like a scene and an album is like a film. The scenes they switch from one to the other. One minute you're in bed with some beautiful woman and then suddenly you're out on the street afterwards, sort of getting into the car or whatever. It's not all just one thing. We used to do that on *Deceit* a lot, switch from the song about windows and being watched and the power structure of the domestic to a big power structure of history. It's just like those two things being conjoined. It can be hard though—the record sort of made Gareth leave and move away and it was all a bit much, but it's a great record.

MRR: You said that you're "committed to the song but the shapes have to change." What do you mean by that?

The A/B/A/B structures and the chorus refrains—something about that has to change and the nature of the relationship between the vocal line and its accompaniment that has to sort of move around a bit. Personally, I'm making this music that has a lot of chance. The Who—they broke the music, they changed the music and that changed the culture. If the music contains the culture then we're doing something wrong, because the culture is pretty static and it's also not very generous, it's quite selfish and it feels to me that it also demands each of us sacrificing ourselves to this hierarchical thing, so it's not even very kind to us. If we change the shapes of the music, then maybe we'll change the shape of everything. Punk, after a while became so stylized. The Berlin characters; the Rat-woman, who always had a rat that she'd put in her mouth—totally perverse things being presented as if they're liberation when really they're just a reaction to another form of oppression.

MRR: Do you think it's important for music to not to take itself too seriously and retain a certain level of accessibility? Though there are audiences that might want to hear a fifteen-minute drone, it's a small number.

The audiences that sometimes give that type of music a lot of room—they're the equivalent of the Berlin Rat Lady. They're making themselves be something in reaction to something else, and not actually being genuine. I think I lot of the avant-garde is just a pose. It's a bit like Nouvelle Cuisine. It's all very nice in theory but it's not a proper meal. It's like art-food. It was expensive too. That's what a lot of contemporary music is for me—it's just hasn't got the stuff that gives you the energy to go out and do the next thing.

MRR: What do you think makes a good music improviser?

You define it and then it's not that. When I was with This Heat, Gareth had never really played before—but his spirit and his way of listening to other things and what he listened to and the connections he made, and just being with him, made me think "well he's going to be able to play." He was, he was connected to this very visceral thing.

MRR: Do you think technical ability is important?

I can't really see how absence of technique is a good thing after a while. It's great as a starting point because otherwise what other point is there to start at. This idea of not taking yourself seriously until you've got some technique, that won't work for me—that's why a lot of this work I do with people with disability works because I take the sound they make seriously. It's always been like that. Also part of it is the joy in getting more and more control and more and more ability to make something happen. I think that's important. You don't stay still and progress in a negative unlearning way, what it is to be human is you learn. You learn by committing yourself to something over a sustained period. What I really try to manifest is a certain sort of energy field. I also want it to be an energy field that's challenging. I want it to be a confrontational energy field, I want it to be like "Christ, this geezer's doing this thing, and it's that full-on, with that much energy!?" I want it to be a challenge to people.

MRR: Do you have a set approach you employ when making music?
Different projects, different things—I've been in situations, working with an engineer on a professional level and not known the engineer prior to the project. We'll start to build something and suddenly find the opposite of that idea and I hear it and I go "ah, that's better than the idea" and the engineer will go "but you want to do the opposite of what you first said!" It's like, the object of the exercise for me is not to successfully accomplish the thing I first set out to do, and it's to make something that sounds right. That's the first thing to say really.

I often like to have a certain sort of violence to the idea that needs to be accomplished. I don't mean that the idea has to be violent but that the making of it happen feels determined; "I'm going to make this one gesture and it's going to go there!" I find that very useful, although sometimes that's not necessarily what gets communicated. When improvising after the first note you don't really know what you're going to do. The second note defines the first note and itself, the third note defines the two that have gone before and it's starting to find the fourth note already and the fifth. So, after a while a successful improvisation is more about recognizing when the end is going to happen and accepting that and not worrying about how long that is. It could be sort of a minute and a half. I've heard people go beyond the end. It's a split second. You have to be very hyper about knowing when that is.

MRR: Have you been through periods when you had no creative ideas or weren't happy with those you've come up with?
I had a very high output rate and it was almost like anything I turned my mind to I could make it happen. To excuse being late for rehearsals by up to an hour and a half, I would need to come up with an excuse. I used to cycle to rehearsal, write a song, and then get to rehearsal and say "Ah, sorry, I was up all night—I've got this thing." I'd written the song in my head on the bicycle and then I'd get there. I'd come in with such a thing and bits wouldn't work but it's always good to have bits that don't work as it gives the other people something to do, and then it's like "Oh, thanks, you got rid of the bits that don't work, good one you." So that's what I used to do. It was very easy for me at one point and there's mathematics of course. It's like sand running out of an egg timer, there's plenty of the stuff and then there's less and less of the stuff. That's quite a sad thing to have to recognize but it also means that songs do come through either in a very slow way or they come through really fast. Both are really joyful experiences for me. One came through in a day really and it really came through in about ten minutes.

MRR: I've heard your music described, particularly with This Heat as "before its time," but how can that really be if one has the foresight, technology, creativity, surely it is of its time?
I did a gig last Thursday and I was selling my single for a fiver—and I'd come off the stage and I don't usually go to a dressing room (and the dressing room is usually through the audience anyway). There was someone saying he's got his [Hayward's] single here and I found myself saying "Yeah, buy it now 'cause in 30 years time it's going to be worth £320." That's the truth of it, *Blue and Yellow* was sold and now it's worth much more than it was. It's all a bit bonkers really and I find it heartbreaking. It's a sort of sorrow for the one's doing the stuff that's 30 years ahead of its time. I just don't know what's going on—I just can't understand how people don't want to be at the edge. As long as the edge doesn't involve heroin or suicide or killing people, that's not a very good edge, but if the edge is just about new developments in sound, I can't see the problem, it's a pretty safe area in which to be. Maybe it's a bit loud and you might get tinnitus so turn it down or put some ear plugs (that's the newest health and safety issue).

MRR: Do you enjoy working with other people?
Yes, I love working with other people.

MRR: More so than working on your own?
Well, I'm working on my own when I'm on a train on my way to a gig on my own, when the kids have gone to bed and Lesley is still out and I'm babysitting, just as I fall asleep, when I'm in the bath. This is quite an essential one to me, walking to get the milk or the newspaper or anything. Especially, working on my own when I meet people who aren't musicians who talk about their reality. A lot of the songwriting comes from that experience actually. I don't feel it's a selfish thing, I think it's quite a gregarious thing, but it comes across quite weird because you're on your own.

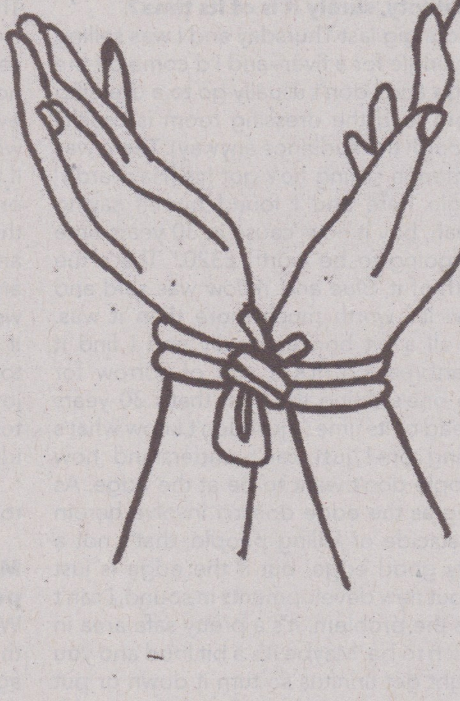
MRR: How, if at all, do you think you've been affected by the decline of physical music formats, the rise of MP3s and music piracy?
I actually think that if people were very happy with their lives and we all were fulfilled then the need for money would actually fall away. This has been a feeling from about sixteen / seventeen, I've always thought that really the description of a successful society would involve the abolition of money, because everyone would do what they were doing already, they already loved what they were doing. The bits of the job that were the toilet cleaning, they'd do that too because it's a service to everyone else. No one's a slave, no one's a servant, no one's in a hierarchy, everyone's equal and we're all doing what we do. That is really what I aspire to. If Christianity can set itself up as a project or Marxism can set itself up as a project, this seems to me to be a [valid] project and it seems like a generational project and I'm quite aware of the fact that if we were to even embark on it as an idea it would take another ten generations to actually manifest, but we'd have the joyful ten generations of actually moving towards this place. It all seems like a great idea to me.

How come it's the musicians that have to do it first?

MRR: Does This Heat have any plans to perform together outside of London?
We plan on playing outside London through 2017 but not too much, the central agenda is forward, not that we're playing the music like a nostalgia / museum thing, the material's been reworked and the large version is a fifteen to eighteen piece group, so happy it's got that same sense of pushing forward.

Charles Hayward played two successful shows with This Is Not This Heat earlier this year at London's Café OTO. They were due to play at the Barbican in July but injury has prompted the gigs to be postponed till 2017. Amongst other projects, Charles Hayward currently plays drums in the excellent Albert Newton.

LAS VENAS



Las Venas are a Madrid-based punk quartet who have released two 7”s, both on Madrid record label Blondes Must Die. They were also included in the Matado por la Muerte Vol 2 *compilation. Made up of members of bands like Juanita y Los Feos, Peluquería Canina, Nadie, Sierra Leona, and Tetallica, they play a simple, no label punk, defined by cave dweller drums and alternating male / female vocals.*

Interview & introduction by Mugretone. Photos provided by Iñigo Amescua & Santiago Rodriguez.

MRR: Tell us how the band was formed and how you did the casting. Did you have a clear picture of what you wanted to do from the start? Why did you decide to sign up a second guitar player a little later?

Ana: Casting? There wasn’t a line waiting to play with us…It might sound weird but I always had problems finding people to play with, in a “proper” project.

Anyway, Ángel and I wanted to play together and we started a band called Los Gusanos with our friend Carmelo from Peluquería Canina but after a short while he didn’t have much time to practice with us so we thought to ask Adriana, who was the drummer of a band we both admire, Tetallica.

Ángel: Adriana is one of my favorite drummers. She is heavy and her references are Iron Maiden, W.A.S.P., Metallica, etc., even though she is not able to play those kind of complex rhythms. With those references, getting her to play the basic punk that Las Venas does, seemed to be a pretty fun and a great idea.

Obviously we were going to play punk but, personally, I had it very clear that I wasn’t looking for any established label before starting, like “Hey guys, we are going to play punk ’77 or ’80s hardcore, or ’80s Spanish punk.” I totally refused to do that. I had a couple of song ideas, so we went to the practice room and tried to see

what could happen.
Adriana: After our first show we realized a second guitar would help us get the sound we wanted so we asked Nacho to join us, and he was just what we needed.

MRR: Do you think we can talk about an evolution in Las Venas in just two EPs? To my ears, it seems to be a turn to faster melodies, especially when Ana's singing songs. It's not getting to hardcore, but it is along the line of bands like Silla Eléctrica. All this while keeping the primitivism you display, marked by that jackhammer drums sound. You probably see many other differences...
Ángel: I'm not sure if talking about evolution in our short and ridiculous discography is too much, but yes, I think in those two songs there are some differences compared to the others.

When I sing I like songs to have a certain pop air in the vocal melodies. That's precisely one of the things I like most about Las Venas. I mean, our sound and way of playing is very basic and raw but there is place for melody. At least I always see that place. That mix is something that attracts me a lot. Sounding raw but with melody.

When Ana sings, the songs are more visceral, fast and straightforward, both lyrically and musically. Besides that, Ana's voice and way she sings lead us to do other styles somehow closer to hardcore / punk.
Adriana: Fast songs were always there, but I just couldn't play them right so we were rejecting them after a few rehearsals. With time I was able to play them. Besides, I think when it comes to Ana in compositions she does songs with faster rhythms.

MRR: There is a certain uniformity marked by drums and sound, but it looks like there is more than one person composing. Who composes and how does the process work?
Ángel: Usually I bring the song structures, melodies and lyrics, and later all together, in the practice room, we finish the songs—except the two songs from our last EP, "Negar, mentir, sufrir, vivir" and "Podrida," where Ana brought the lyrics and melodies and we put together the music while she was humming the riffs that she had in her mind.
Ana: Mostly Ángel and I write the songs, but I would say in every song is part of all us since Ángel or I bring some riff or idea to the practice room and then we develop it together. It is probably true that the songs I do are different to the ones from Ángel, but as I said, it's pretty much something we do all together.
Ángel: I'm totally convinced that songs end up being as they are because of the references, tastes, and our personal way of playing. In my opinion that's what is "unique" in every band. I suppose Adriana is thinking of Megadeth, Nacho of Marked Men, Ana of Último Resorte and me, the Buzzcocks. With all that mix, it comes out this way!

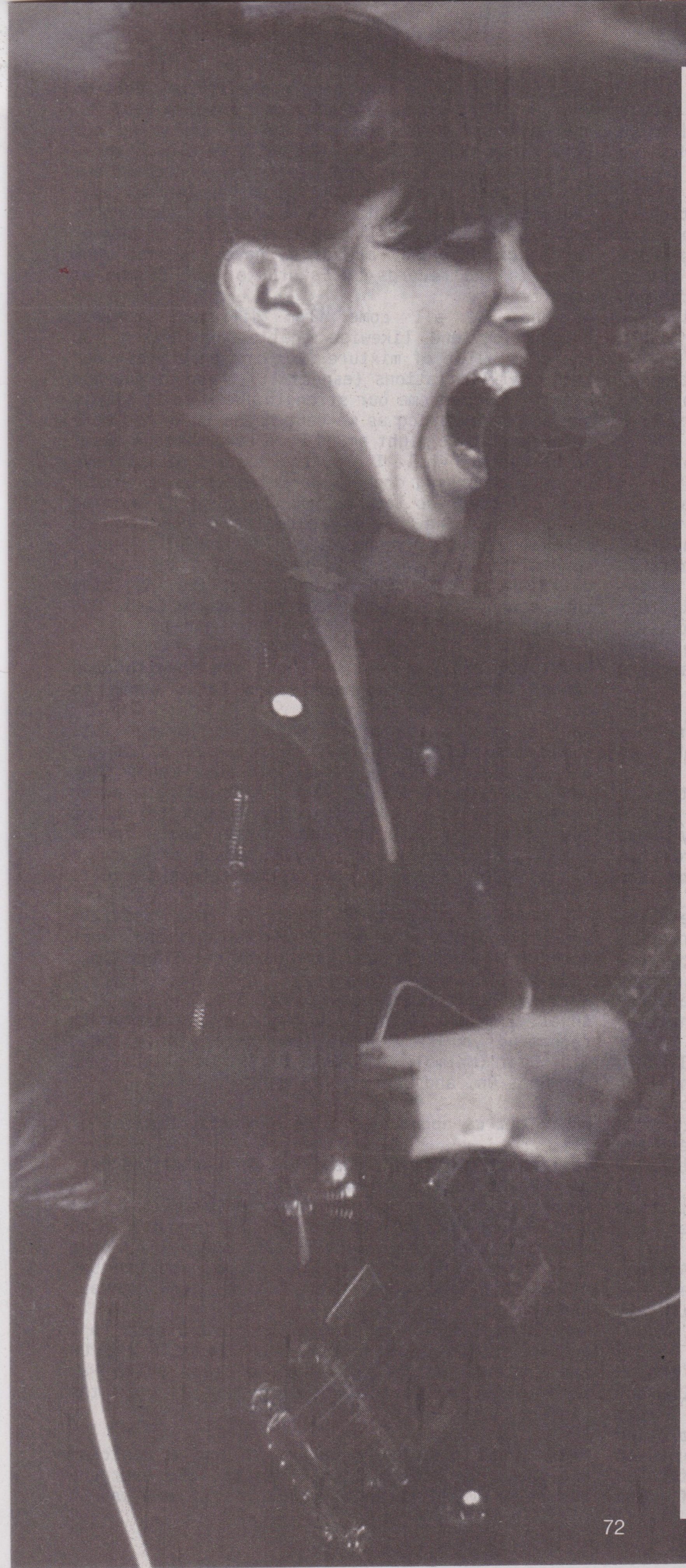
MRR: One thing I quite like is that, even though the band sounds punk, it doesn't sound like any particular group. It is hard to find a direct influence. While some other bands sounds a lot like Dead Kennedys, Ramones, Gorilla Angreb, or even copy them, you just don't sound like any particular one. It may be the result of a mixture of different influences or maybe something premeditated. What do you say? What groups influence and inspire you?
Ana: I would never waste a second analyzing our references in a matter of the music we play…because I like so many things that are truly references but I'm not able to play anything similar for multiple reasons. I listen a lot of Calypso, R&B, soundtracks and exótica and you'll never recognize in any of our songs…But yeah, all of us have listened many times to the records of Eskorbuto, the Cramps or Interterror.
Adriana: We all come from different musical background, and likewise that's the reason why there is a lot of mixture. I think once again our technical limitations (especially those of Ana and myself) have become our strength. We keep it simple but as overpowering as we can. Maybe if we had more arrangements we might sound more like someone else. To be honest, while I play the drums I always have bands with strong drums like Chingaleros in mind.
Ángel: I guess so long as you don't say "I'm going to do something in particular" you don't sound like something in particular. The truth is that I copy a lot of things from bands that I like but I do it quite badly and you can't realize. Anything that sounds honest influences me: Johnny Cash, Bad Brains, Devo, or RIP.

MRR: What can you tell us about the Spanish punk scene? Could you recommend some local bands to us?
Ana: It used to be great! Haha, I'm joking, it's great, and is pretty easy to organize DIY shows around the country and that probably means that you'll be able to find at least a nice punk character in every city or town friendly enough to manage your show, and give you some dinner and a couch. I miss, at least in my city, a young crew and a bit of music diversity but I guess this is self-critical.

I'm gonna say just new bands, I like Pesadilla and Ultra, both from BCN, Power Balance and Jaume Bored from Valencia, and Portadores del Tinga Tinga from Madrid .
Adriana: My favorites one is R.O.B.O.
Ángel: I'm now living in Denmark so I'd prefer to recommend you some bands from here, for example Lig, Snor (Malmö), Big Mess, Bliss, Monoliths, the War Goes On, and Überkrøppling.

MRR: Tell us about your side projects. Musical or not.
Adriana: Right now I'm playing with Teacher Teacher, which is a punk pop band.
Ángel: I'm playing with Peluquería Canina and this year we put on a LP with Going Underground. I also make many punk posters, flyers and covers and I have an artistic collective called Cheap. You can see all of this here: angel-herrera.tumblr.com / cheap-cheap.org.
Ana: I'm playing with Nadie. We have a demo tape and we just made a lovely short tour in the UK and Ireland. We're gonna have a break while Pat is touring the world with Belgrado. Back in the winter!

MRR: Is it possible nowadays to find a musician who plays in one band only? Looks like everyone has several simultaneous bands, as if one wasn't



enough. What do you think of this?
Adriana: I think that if you enjoy playing you will probably have fun playing in as many bands as you can. Just like in any other thing in life, different concerns are usually fulfilled with different people. Or maybe we just have various friends with which we enjoy making music.
Ángel: In Madrid if three or four specific people died in an accident fifteen bands would disappear in that moment. [*laughs*] I've realized the same would happen in Copenhagen. There was a period in my life when I was playing with four bands at the same time. I enjoyed and still enjoy doing this.
Ana: For me it's complicated to be involved in more than one band, I'm usually quite busy and I also have a lot of non-musical personal projects so sometimes it's complicated to find time to meet with people in the practice room…but I wish my days were longer to do it! Like many others I spend quite a lot of my time thinking about the sense of life and maybe I'm wrong but I end up realizing that the more prolific you are, the more sense your existence has. So if you're able to do ten good bands, why not?

MRR: This question is straight for Adriana, but all can answer it. I think Tetallica is one of the greatest geniuses who have emerged in Spain so far this century. The band appeared as something "funny," five girls who could not play shit and gave terrible shows, without having rehearsed that much. But I think the songs recorded on their only 7" are a fucking punk masterpiece. Something that comes up unintentionally. I think that the real essence of punk, the "anyone can do it" is there. What do you think of this? Why has Tetallica disbanded? How did you feel about that?
Adriana: Tetallica was one of the most fun things I've done. There were not any big aspirations—we just wanted play together, we had fun writing the lyrics (an art that nobody can do better than Raquel), and also designing t-shirts or planning things to do on stage such as carrying small blood pills in our mouths or throwing ketchup at the audience. We just did anything we thought would be fun. Actually, rehearsal was more about beer and Risketos than anything.

At a certain point it started to get harder and harder to rehearse wtih the five of us together, so it was hard to get to do something. Then Raquel moved to Stockholm and that was the end of it. There were no bitter feelings or anything like that, I guess the same way it all started—because we were having fun, it all ended once it was more of a routine.

But who knows, maybe one day we might all get together again!

MRR: Without leaving aside Tetallica but returning to Las Venas—don't you think that

CUERVO STORM

a girls band is often something sexist? I mean when this is intentional that all the members of the group must have a particular sex, not when five friends from school come together. When a girl is deliberately sought for each instrument.

Don't you think it's a much less sexist group with two girls and two boys as yours? Something that arises spontaneously, not paying attention to the gender of the different components. Have you been called to play just because your name is feminine gendered and there are two girls in the band?

Adriana: Talking about Tetallica, it was never created to be a girl band—we just were friends, and we had fun together. For me it doesn't make sense to choose to play with someone just because of their sex. But I do think is really good that more and more girls are playing in bands and hopefully more and more will be playing.

Ángel: My ideas about forming a band, besides to play music, always have been to have good times with my friends. Of course, their gender never was important. Nevertheless, we live in a patriarchal world. There are millions of things which are run and solved by men. They are so omnipresent that we are not even able to realize and think about it. Sometimes gestures like "we're gonna do a girl band" are a way to show that dissatisfaction and nonconformity against patriarchy. Are there other ways of protesting? For sure. Is this sexist? No, not at all.

Nobody has called us for having two girls in our band but we put out a song on a compilation called *Hit With Tits* about bands with girls among their members.

Ana: I have always been in bands with girls, and I wasn't looking for it, it has always been something that came naturally. But even if I wasn't looking for girls to have bands with I don't think it's sexist to do it, since unfortunately it's mostly always guys playing in bands. Now it's changing, at least in Barcelona!

MRR: Now that Ana lives in Barcelona and Ángel in Copenhagen, can be the band be considered to be dissolved? Or, are you guys still active? Do you plan to put out something new?

Ángel: We have an unreleased song which will be on a compilation at the end of this year.

Ana: I think we both moved at the moment we were finally playing a bit better...so we're planing to do a couple more shows and then who knows!

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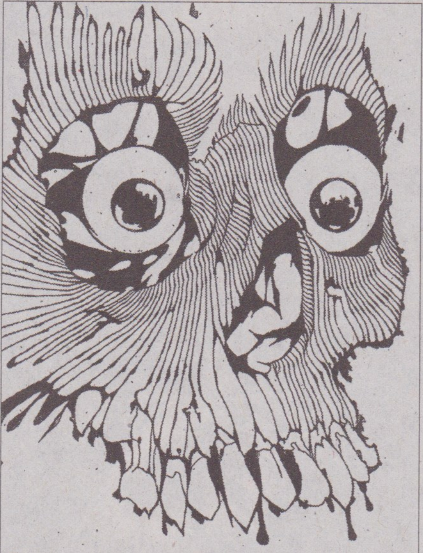

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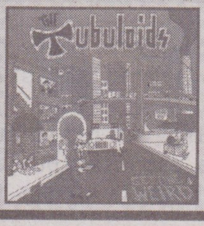

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DRONEZ

are a powerful D-beat force, with a strong sense of punk community and Philadelphia pride. Catch their track on the *No Sun Shines Here* 7" comp, reviewed later in this issue, and stay tuned for an upcoming full-length!

Interview by Amelia Eakins. Photos provided by Stephen Dyer.

MRR: I understand y'all started in Austin, Texas?
Kate: I'm gonna say that was a "sorta" start. Jay and I started the band, it had the name, but it wasn't anything like what we are now. It was a four-piece then, and not really D-beat. We had one or two D-beat songs, but we made a lot more compromises with the other members to play music everyone wanted to play and there wasn't a solid structure to the whole thing. I've always had a vision of the direction of the band and back then it was not meeting it. So we stopped playing for about a year and reformed in Philadelphia in 2014 as the Dronez we have today. Jay and I rewrote some songs, wrote new ones, and went into the studio as a two-piece; me on drums, Jay on guitar, bass, vocals. What manifested was the *215* flexi.

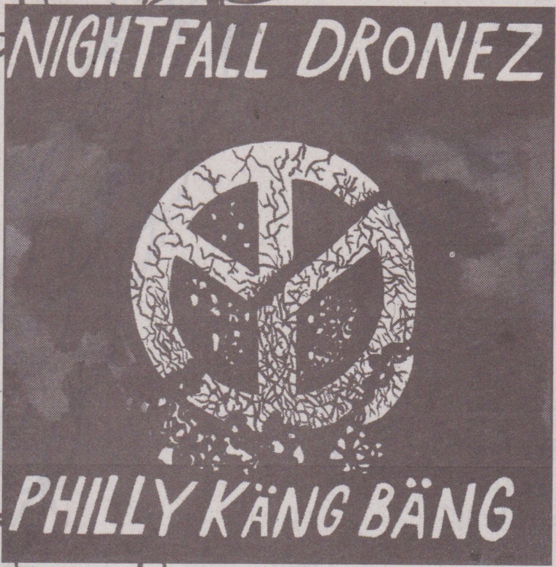
MRR: How'd you wind up in Philly?
Kate: I've lived here for twelve years, so this is home. Texas was a brain fart, we made the band there and skipped town quick! There's still people we love in Texas, but we are an East Coast band, through and through
Jay: I moved to Philly almost six years ago. It was somewhere I always wanted to live. So I packed my shit and caught a bus and moved here, and haven't regretted it yet. Kate and I were in Texas for a little over a year, but it wasn't for us, so we're happy to be home.
Shawn: I moved to Philly fourteen years ago in spring of 2002. I got outta school, kicked around my hometown for a while. Wasn't happy. Had a bunch of friends move here. Needed a change of pace so I peaced out to Philly to play music and find my way in this stupid world.

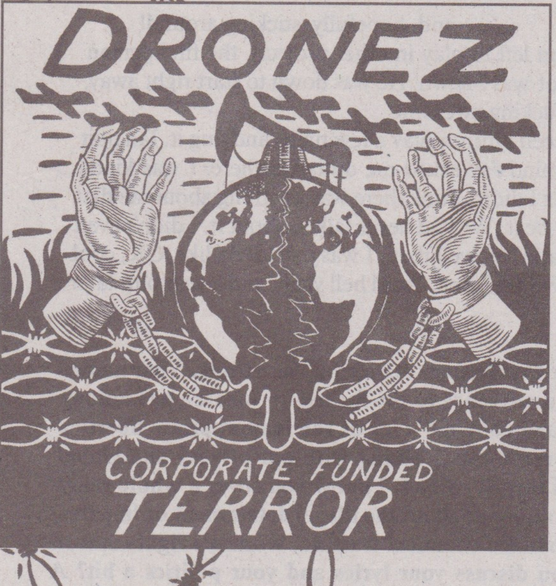
MRR: So the two core members have always been Jay and Kate, with some others in the mix?
Jay: Originally, our friends Ash and Sean were playing with us in Austin. When we moved back to Philly we had our friend Ian play bass for a few months. He wrote a few songs with us, and recorded bass tracks for the *Philly Kang Bang* split 7" with Nighfall.
Kate: We made two recordings with solely us. Now Shawn is here and, hopefully, sticking around!
Jay: After Ian left to play in other projects, the first person we thought of was Shawn. He was down to start right away, which was fucking awesome.
Shawn: I'd seen Dronez play a few times and dug it. Ian quit and in my mind Jay asked me outta nowhere. I was kinda surprised cuz I didn't think there was anything about me that screamed D-beat. We had never talked about it. I didn't even know Kate and Jay well then. I was just kinda like, OK, cool I'm down! We practiced, I said hell yeah, and a year plus later here we are.

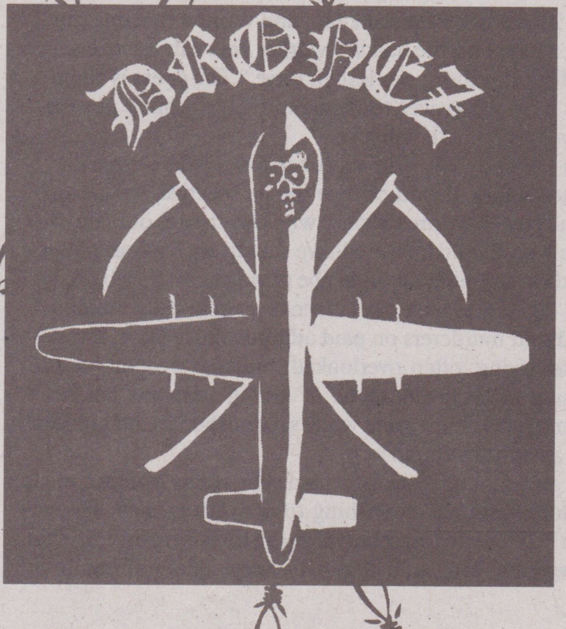
MRR: I like that Dronez stands for something. Your name, in itself, is a reference to the fucked up warfare technology of the day and conjures a lot of the inappropriate liberties that our government is taking with our privacy and global domination tactics abroad. I know you cover a whole range of issues from songs about the illegal detainment of inmates, the use of banned chemical warfare, women's rights and so on. Can you discuss your lyrics and your politics a bit? A short rant?
Kate: I'm a big Chuck Palahniuk fan, and wanted to name the band Dronez based on the haiku: "worker bees can leave, even drones can fly away, the queen is their slave." The poem is about how we all have the power to dismantle the so-called powers that be, if we just unite to will it so.

There is a 1%. Only 1%. Who rely on *us* to keep the system they have designed going. If you change the perspective, we are the ones with the power, we are the ones who can change our fate, we are the ones who should be feared. We should *not* fear our public servants and we definitely shouldn't be paying taxes (to a banking cartel, but I digress) to have our citizens systematically murdered only to send said murderers on paid administrative leave. Drones are also a terrifying, often overlooked, military weapon we use overseas using a disgusting tactic of sitting someone behind a screen to simulate a video game while sending hellfire on innocent civilians in a war-torn country.

There is an agenda, there is a plan, but it has nothing to do with "freedom" and has everything to do with money. The war criminals in D.C. created an enemy that can transform into anything and anyone, even you. And they will keep selling ammunition,







weapons, and killing innocents, from the countries they invade to the soldiers they con into fighting a rich man's war on the lie of a better future for them and their families and fail them once they return home wounded. I feel as though the name Dronez embodies our thoughts on the theme of our lyrical content with the dual meaning: empowering the individual (worker bee) to unite with their brothers and sisters to encourage reforming a broken system and also not allowing you to forget about the disgusting murder weapon / perverted creeper, the symbol of totalitarianism to civilians overseas. Shining a light on the lie that is National Security and the killing of innocent civilians. There will never be a balance and murder is never an ethical option.

MRR: Tell us about Ryvvolte Records.
Jay: Ryvvolte Records was originally *Ryvvolte Zine*, but after a few issues we called it quits. I wanted to focus more on making records, something I always wanted to do. It took awhile to start. At first we were only doing Dronez releases, but now we are starting to put out records for local Philly bands. There's so much great fucking music here that I think the world's gotta hear. Ryvvolte Records did the Dronez split with Nightfall a couple of months ago and is releasing the Philadelphia comp *No Sun Shines Here*, a six band compilation featuring Dopestroke, the Brood, Alement, Incisor, Interloper, and Dronez. We're in the midst of releasing Alement's first 7" and much more stuff is in the works, but people gotta keep their eyes open for that shit, not ready to announce everything just yet! I also distro new and used records at gigs and on ryvvolterecords.storenvy.com to fund further projects that we'll be releasing. It's been a lot of fucking work, but it's been fun as hell.

MRR: And you're getting ready to drop that split with Humanmania (Baltimore) hopefully this spring, right?
Shawn: Who knows?! One can dream though haha.
Jay: Oh, it's happening! We're just waiting on their tracks and we'll have it sent to the plant shortly after. Humanmania fucking rules. Something else is in the works too, but again, too early to announce it.

MRR: Who do you use to press records? Do you make your own covers?
Jay: I use different plants for different releases, depending upon the run.
Kate: I help with the artwork if it calls for it. We always try to do it ourselves as much as possible. I think it's important for collectors and for punks, it's part of our fucking culture! No one wants mass-produced bullshit with no heart. There's something about getting a screen-printed album that's irreplaceable. The *215* flexi was made with a linocut block…250 fucking prints with a linocut block. That sucked, but we did it. And we steal a lot from Staples. *A lot.*

MRR: How long have you been screenprinting?
Kate: I learned by lying on an application to become a screen printer for a pretty big name international punk clothing company that is in our local area. That was about twelve years ago. I fucked up a lot of their products and got paid terribly there, but on the plus side I learned how to screen print! That was my M.O. for years after that.

MRR: What do you each do for day jobs?
Kate: Tattoo artist at Seven Swords Tattoo Co.
Shawn: I'm a bartender. I work at the best bar in Philly—Tattooed Moms on South Street. Fourteen years now! This place rules.
Jay: I work for a food distribution business in Philly.

MRR: In what ways are you active in the Philly punk scene?
Jay: I go to whatever gig I can, flyer, support local punk businesses, book gigs, put out records, and am active in a lot of protests throughout the city. I'm also involved in Philly Still Fucking Shreds, a festival some of my best friends and I have been throwing the past two years, which is a great time. We also house bands coming through at times when we're able to help out.
Kate: I used to be very active, I ran a house venue called Halfway House for years. Now I just draw a lot. I do flyers whenever people need them, I promote

a lot for the record label, help scout out bands, draw up album covers, inserts, etc. and screen print. Play shows in the band (obviously). I do a lot of punk tattoos, I don't know if that counts? I help out with booking shows if I need to or if I owe someone a favor, but it's very thankless work I try to avoid. I think I paid my dues! I help with the PSFS festival. And go to protests whenever I can.

Shawn: I used to be more active as well. Did shows at whatever shitty house I was living in at the time. Cooked food for bands, put up bands. Don't do shows anymore. But still put up bands and stuff on occasion. Obviously play shows. Go to shows when I can. Other than that, I just try not to be a shitty person or fuck shit up for the scene.

I used to do protests. These days my anxiety and anger are through the roof. I spent a week in prison here in Philly during the RNC protests in 2000. One piece of wisdom I didn't know back then: don't go to jail in Philly. People jokingly refer to RNC 2000 as the anarchist meat grinder. That experience fucked me up for a while. It was terrible. The police are terrible. The judicial system is terrible. You realize how helpless you are once you're trapped inside the system and it wants to make an example of you. Those people fucked my life up for a while. For what? Using my constitutional rights? What a fucking joke. It still is. Seeing cops would put me in a rage. It still does. Fuck the police.

MRR: What do you think is important to support punk community and scene unity?

Shawn: This is our world. Gotta make the best of it. Be supportive to other people and other bands. Don't fuck up show spaces. Don't have an ego. Whatever you're doing now has been done by people before you. The circle goes round and we all have our place in it. So respect each other. Love your friends. And keep shitty people out. Nobody will stand up for this scene if we don't.

Jay: Remembering there's other people and bands other then yourself and your projects. If you want to practice what you preach, just fucking do it, it's that simple. It's an amazing community full of really awesome people, keep the snitches out, keep punk alive.

sunn
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Kate: Yeah, I think creating a community and helping uphold it by not being selfish is very important. A scene is bigger than one person, one band. That's what makes a community. Especially in a time in our society that thrives on tearing up communities, I think it's super important for punks to keep on the same team. When shit goes down, you want to see that person in a crowd with a legit studded vest and know they have your back! Also, facebook invites are fucking lame and killing an important part of punk culture: *flyers*. Just make them. Hand them out. Put them in your local record stores. *Do it.*

MRR: What's the scene like right now in Philly?

Shawn: Philly scene fucking rules. Proud to be Philly these days. Lotsa people doing great things to keep DIY punk going: Second Empire and the people there, PSFS, Kate and Jay do a lot of cool stuff. I dunno it's just great. Can't name everyone but you know who you are. I don't go to every show—I can't. But it's nice to know that people are dedicated to making this scene work so that I can go to shows. Much love to everyone who sacrifices and loves punk and keeps it going.

Kate: Exciting. Lots of new voices being heard: women, LGBTQ, POC. It's super exciting for me to see this change in dynamic in the Philly scene.

Jay: Still the best. Always gigs going on, tons of parties, amazing organized protests throughout the city when shit pops off. Sit and Spin Records is also hands down one of the best record shops in the country too. The vast majority of the punk venues are either houses, garages, warehouses, or just thrown wherever, total fucking DIY city.

MRR: Any bands you play with a lot, besides Nightfall? Do you play a lot with the bands off the Philly comp Ryvvolte released?

Kate: We share Shawn with the Brood, and we will being doing dates with Alement. Humanmania are our family in Baltimore along with Old Lines and Bidet. In Pittsburgh we usually play with Mower, Killer of Sheep, and Eel.. Connecticut's Mouthbreather get honorable mention. Our buddies in Clevo: Lacerate. And NYC: Extended Hell.

Shawn: We don't play Philly a lot. Usually it's with different touring bands.

Jay: All the above bands, plus I really liked playing with Claw a lot—that band's fucking great.

MRR: Is the scene segregated? Like, are you guys part of a D-beat raw punk scene or do all the scenes kind of blend together?

Shawn: It is segregated to a degree I think. I don't feel it cuz I don't give a fuck. But there are a lot of people here, so it's inevitable. There's West Philly punks. South Philly punks. North Philly punks (OK, not really! Just me and a few others!). But yeah some people refuse to cross the river etc. Some are anti-West Philly. Others anti-

South Philly. It's all stupid to me. I don't care, I'll go anywhere. People need to get over stupid shit.
Kate: Like any scene, there is drama. I don't subscribe to the thought of our scene as segregated, we are all in this together: Philly Punks.
Jay: It can be segregated at times. There are so many punks here that love every genre of it. For the most part everyone just goes to whatever gig they want to at the end of the day, which is why there can be multiple gigs in the city at any night. I think some bands suck out here, and some really fucking rule. I pretty much just go to whatever I wanna see, which is D-beat and crust bands.

MRR: Are you planning any tours soon?
Kate: I hope so!! I've been pushing for us to do a Cali / West Coast tour, but we will see. Hopefully another small weekend tour before winter.
Shawn: None planned yet. Definitely offers. Life has been crazy lately so gotta take it easy for the time being. I'm sure we'll get something going in the near future.

MRR: What's next for Dronez?
Jay: We're writing for an LP right now that we'll release on Ryvvolte in 2017.
Kate: Plus a Humanmania split and another top secret split.

MRR: Studs and leather?
Jay: Leather loves studs.
Kate: Always and forever.
Shawn: Duh.

MRR: Any last words, punks?
Shawn: Thanks for the interview and taking interest. Thanks to anyone who's come to shows and supports us, supports the scene, talks to us, buys merch, gives us food, lets us destroy your house, and keeps us going. Obviously punk comes from the inside out of necessity so we gotta do it anyway. But it's nice to have people dig it so thank you. Cheers and cider, see yinz all soon I hope!
Jay: Thanks Amelia and Grace for taking the time and interest for this. And to all of our punk rock friends and family across the world, and to anyone who has picked up our records, thanks! We'll see you jerks on the road! Spin more records, party fucking hard, and don't take any shit from the cops and their informers. Fuck the police.
Kate: Au revoir, bon voyage, so long, bye!

dronez.bandcamp.com
ryvvolterecords.storenvy.com

WOMEN IN TORONTO

PUNK CALENDAR 2017

The Women in Toronto Punk calendar showcases and recognizes women in the punk scene of Toronto. Often as women we feel we have to struggle twice as hard to get half as far and we want to let these women know that we see them and that they're doing an awesome job! What they do as a part of the scene is integral, throughout the different genres of punk music and over generations of punk in Toronto.

There are twelve photos for twelve months of the calendar, working through loose ideas and concepts for the photos like SxE HxC, proto- / post-punk, power pop, first wave punk new generation punks, crust, and more!

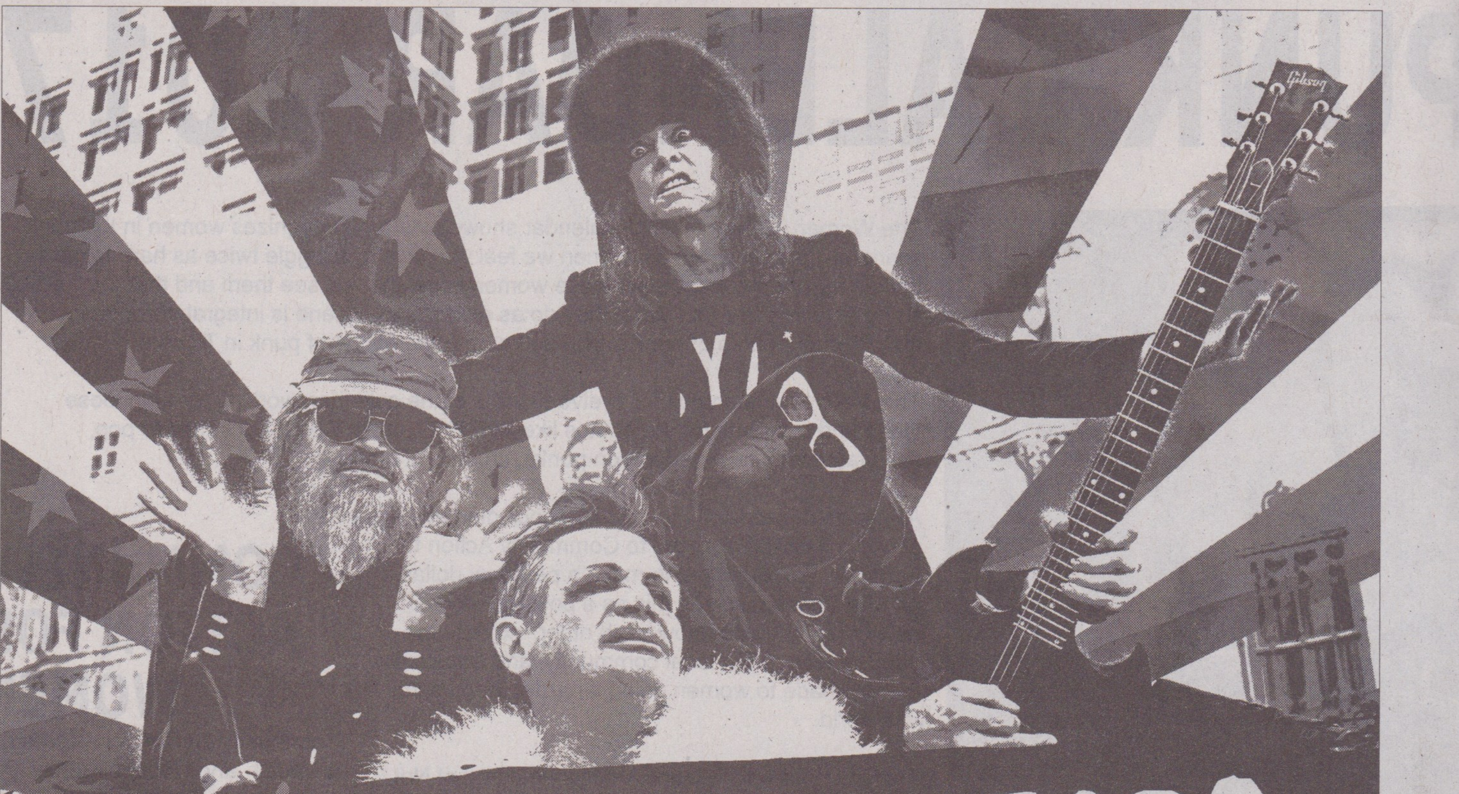
All profits raised from the calendar, including any extra donations will be donated to Community Action for Families. We're not out to make a personal dollar on this. Instead we see this as a positive way for us women to get to know each other, express the things we do in our local community, and donate the money made to women doing it harder than us in this world.

The calendar will be launched the weekend of Not Dead Yet, October 13-16 2016.
It will continue to be available online for sale via *womenintorontopunkcalendar.bigcartel.com* until the end of the year, so please pick up a copy, and in the process support our local community and check out what's going on in the corners of the Toronto Punk scene!

COMMUNITY ACTION FOR WOMEN

Community Action for Women is a small and independently run charity based in Toronto with the aims of supporting *"…a community of people who are mothers, people who use drugs, survivors / fighters, sex workers, and allies"*. They are connected through similar harmful experiences of intrusion into the lives of the families that come to them for support, from systems of oppression especially as they relate to the child "welfare" industrial complex.

They exist to build nurturing and thriving communities and stronger supportive networks for families and children to live, learn, and grow. This is done through actions including amongst other initiatives, "*developing public education forums, and workshops, opportunities to develop an anti-racist/anti oppression framework and feminist analysis, and most recently we are beginning work on new projects to include a telephone support line and a workshop series on advocacy provision*", as well as looking to slowly expand into other areas of support and "*…better advocate for mothers facing child welfare and family court surveillance*".



EXTERMINATORS

EXTERMINATORS
PRODUCT OF AMERICA

Exterminators were born in 1977 out of many of the same punk rock ingredients as their early peers: angst, empathy-by-force, impulse, and necessity. Several young dudes came together, bashed out some songs, and damaged a few brain cells along the way while helping to lay the foundation for the Phoenix underground music scene to come. Some of these dudes you may have heard of once or twice; Don Bolles (Germs/Ariel Pink), Dan Clark (Feederz/Victory Acres), Doug Clark (Mighty Sphincter), and Cris Kirkwood (Meat Puppets) resurrected the Exterminators to descend upon the masses and bestow their timeless recording of Product of America exclusively for Slope Records.

PRODUCT OF AMERICA

12" LP COMING NOVEMBER 8TH

SLOPE RECORDS

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DIRTY WOMBS

Introduction by Will of Desolate Records.
Interview by George of *Winterview* fanzine.
Translation by Ioanis Galiatsos.

When Dino sent me the tracks for the Dirty Wombs Wrecked Youth 7" last year I initially couldn't work out what I thought of them. The band's combination of Greek hardcore and crust influences with the melodic drive of Japanese hardcore is not an obvious match. But I could not stop listening to it.

After about two weeks of listening I decided it was definitely a record that more people needed to hear. It truly is some devastatingly good and original punk rock. This group of punks from Patras, Greece are truly passionate about what they are doing and you can hear it on the recording. I think if the members of Hakodate greats Crude had grown up in Greece this is what their music would sound like.

The energy these guys bring to their music also manifests in their efforts to create and support independent DIY spaces and organizations in their economically impoverished homeland, an example of the inspiring things that can be born out of this depressing dirty world.

MRR: Who are these dirty wombs and why have they been dirty for so long? Tell us about the whole family.

Dirty Wombs is a group of four good friends, who at one point just decided to rock out, with no concrete plans—at the beginning at least—and without anticipating what would follow, of course. The reasons we still remain dirty are many, I guess... Maybe a collective denial of the world of normalcy and of the passage that the mother / the womb / society makes you travel toward it. The lack of motivation and of future possibilities, the future itself which seems nonexistent, the rage and disappointment that this world makes you feel every day, but also, of course, the destructive, explosive chemistry between us, and keeps us together, 24/7. We are Aris, Dino, Kostas, and, until recently, our friend and brother Vaios. We've given birth to a demo tape, a 7" split with Unfit Earth, a 12" split with Gutter, our first full-length called *Opposite Flow*, and our recent *Wrecked Youth* 7". All of them naughty, bad children, but we try to treat them well...

MRR: Just by listening to your bastard kids, I'd bet their father is Japanese! How come you fell in love with Japanese hardcore? How did you make this

affair work while Greek words were used to express things?
Our bastards were blessed / cursed with being bilingual, that's true. Until we met each other, we had different musical backgrounds, and Japanese hardcore was the common ground where punk, thrash, classic rock, rock'n'roll (and also "heavier" influences) could meet and fit with each other. Our common, hidden passion for heavy metal also helped to push us in this direction and made things clearer regarding where we wanted to go, musically. This feeling of transcendence—the epicness!—and the passion of the Japanese scene are characteristics that won us over immediately. You may find something from all the above in our music, along with a heavy dose of '90s Greek hardcore, of course, and our own personal elements.

MRR: Apart from your musical influences, what were the other inspirations for your aesthetic? How influential were the many graphic artists you've collaborated with? The artwork, the posters, even the trademark logo of your band, they're all really great works, many of them done by hand.
One thing is the general social and political context where we live, which is of course dynamic—it influences and changes your aesthetic. Dirty Wombs surely could never adopt a war aesthetic, with bombardments and stuff like that, which many D-beat and raw bands have adopted. We don't experience these kinds of things here. We live in a context of a great crisis, poverty, and maybe some other aspects of war—immigration, for example—so we can talk only about those things. Our aesthetic is formed around those shades of grey, as a consequence.

The contributions of the various graphic artists you've mentioned are also important. It's nice because in these collaborations there's a great relationship of freedom and interaction between us. You just give a general direction (with lots of room for interpretation) and the artist makes something which fits what you had in mind and is their own personal expression at the same time. Some designs were true landmarks for our band. The womb and the whole cover of *Opposite Flow* gave us the inspiration for lots of lyrics in various songs. The drunken sketch for the track "Night Fever" depicted the fever of our everyday lives in the best way.

MRR: Your new 7" was accompanied by more modern artwork and packaging. And it's not only that; the punk spirit is still burning, but I feel your epic / transcendental aspects and your heavy metal madness more prominently than ever. Is this the release where you finally reached your musical goals?
It's true, this release does have a special place in our hearts. In terms of sound and production it's the best we've ever sounded and, yes, it's the closest we've come to what we've had in mind. The sound is natural and the recording was live, and we think that's a feeling you get when you listen to it. We worked with really great people from all over the world, and it's our first release that's available outside Greece—you can find it in the UK and the US, through Imminent Destruction and Desolate Records respectively. The choice of the artist for our artwork was Kostas's idea. We wanted something else this time, something different than the crust and dotting style of our precious releases, and Branca Studio in Barcelona proved to be ideal. The "eye" has already made its mark, we think. Maybe we could take an even more heavy metal turn in the future! [*laughs*]

MRR: Let's talk about the creative process a bit. It's a given that Kostas is a riff machine, but I also know that Aris is also great in guitar, which can take the creative input of a drummer (which is usually basic) to a whole new level. On the other hand, Dino was and is a real punk freak with experience and taste in punk / hardcore. How do you combine these virtues musically, and how do you write those lyrics with their amazing flow?
We've managed to combine all our personal influences in our music. If you think about it, the burning spirits genre is really open to experimentation. When we first started, only Kostas was familiar with his instrument. Aris hadn't held drumsticks before in his life, and Dino knew only the basics of bass and guitar. But this was interesting, because we've all learned our instruments better through playing together, and we didn't hesitate to play bass and drums with the mentality of a guitar player. We couldn't do it any other way! Recently we've started creating songs through jams, and it's nice because it's a testament that our musical communication has become stronger. As for the lyrics, in the beginning we wrote them as we played the riffs, and it started becoming boring and expected. Now we make a rough recording of the tracks, we put them in a mobile phone, we take a walk through the city, and we write them as we listen.

MRR: There are many rumors about a release in Japan of your whole discography. Do you feel more Japanese than ever after that? Have you ever imagined yourselves as the chosen ones who will bring the "katsapunk" culture to the Far East?
There is something in the works, that's true, but it will take time, so our friends in Japan will have to wait a little! It will be released as a CD. Did you know that in Japan the punks are big fans of CD releases? It's crazy! Do we feel Japanese? Nah, our brute voices will always remind us of our country. It's a really good step though, so people there can get to know us. A little katsapunk never hurt anyone, right?

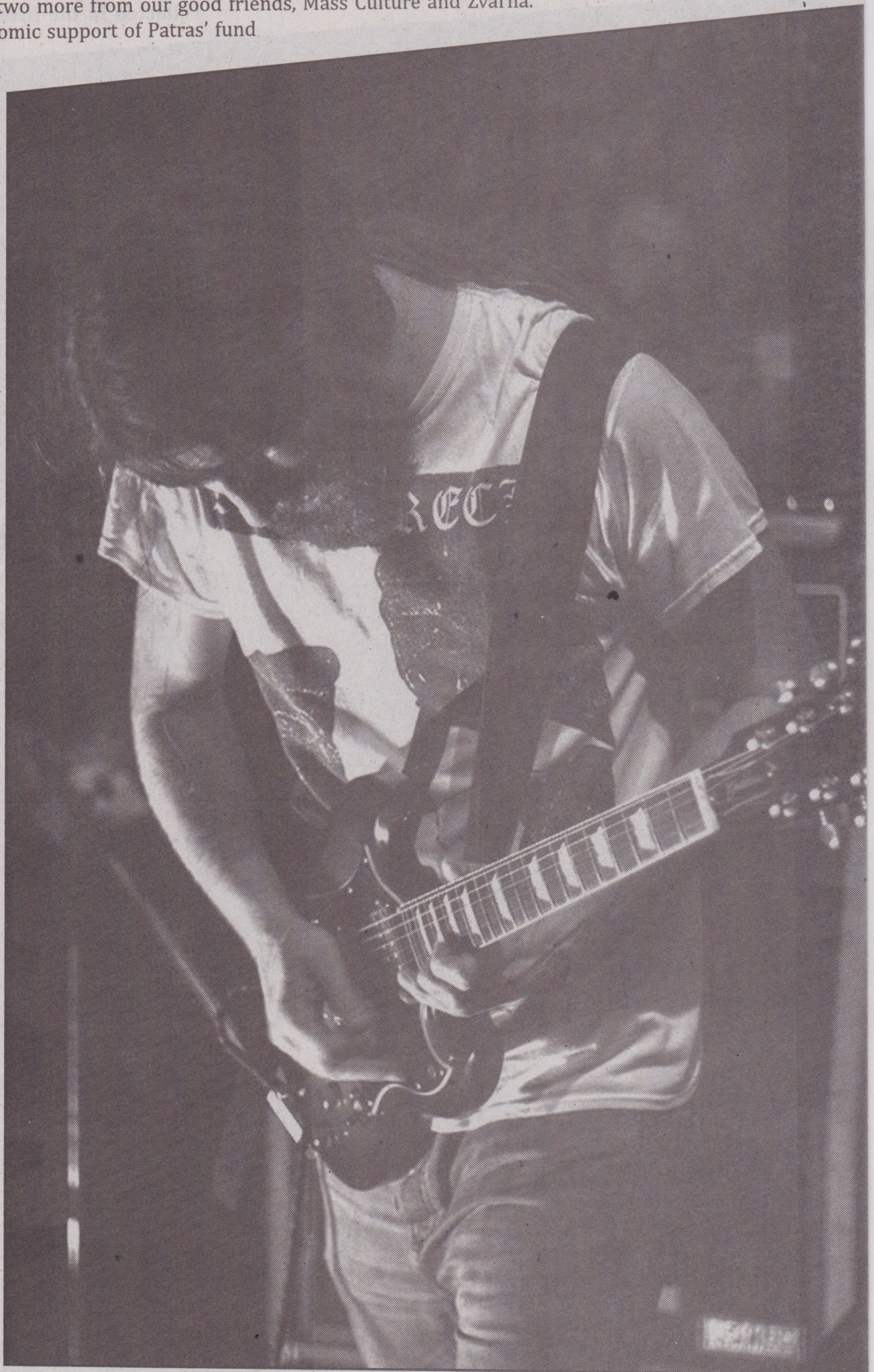
MRR: I don't know if it's that crazy. The technological megacompanies in Japan are so many, and one of them created CDs for the first time. I've never been there, but I've always imagined Japan as a place were everything is automated and digital. If this hyperbole is true, then we shouldn't be surprised that they mostly listen to CDs. So they obviously need a little katsapunk and its spontaneity, with the same way that some people there found a gateway through D-beat and Japanese hardcore. But what is katsapunk? You gotta tell the world. And you should talk about the Greek DIY Scene, in general, and especially the scene in your town, Patras.
Katsapunk is a whole philosophy I'm afraid! It's this really artless, crude Greek style of punk, with shitty production, repetitive drumming, and cult vocals, which through the years has given us many great hymns and special moments which we've all come to love.

The DIY scene in Greece is also special. It has fought tooth and claw to distance itself from every relation with commercialism, profits and mediation. Gigs are organized in squats, in university spaces, in DIY places and open places like squares etc. If you're playing in playing in commercial places with entrance fees you're not very welcome, as a general rule. Releases are self-financed or through small independent labels, and are always sold at the lowest possible price, and this only for the band to continue existing. Some people don't even set a price, and you can give whatever you like, but we find that too much. What you do should be somewhat viable. We are really happy with the scene because things remain mostly pure here, even with its problems, its schisms, its fights, and its dogmatisms. The scene in Patras is run mostly by the same twenty people, but it's admirable how many things so few of us have managed to do in this town.

MRR: Concerning the way the Greek scene works, with its income coming mostly from events with political characteristics—you are participating in a compilation with other bands, from

Patras and other cities. Tell us everything!
It's a compilation titled *35*, a big project that the participating bands and the squat Prokat35 in Patras have worked on for a long time (members from our band participate in the collective of the squat also). The compilation includes ten unreleased songs from the locals Dirty Wombs, CFS, Sardanapalm Death, Terror Detonator, Fields of Locust, Dala Sun, Sarka sto Zoo, Lethe, and two more from our good friends, Mass Culture and Zvarna. The money it makes will be given for the economic support of Patras' fund for prosecuted political activists. It's released in 500 vinyl copies and in a CD format with no set price. Of course you can also download it through the internet for free. We are really moved by the whole project. You know...the feeling that you're going beyond the four walls of the squat and the studio and doing something bigger to help your comrades... It's priceless. For more information, you can visit the page of the squat: prokat35squat.bandcamp.com.

MRR: Having experienced myself the contradiction between purity and dogmatism, I can say that I too enjoy the way the Greek DIY scene works. When DIY starts conversing with institutions, sponsors, bosses, security guys and managers, it loses a big part of its identity, it becomes just another alternative choice, and not a way to combat the existing. On the other hand, the viability and the spreading of DIY sometimes demands compromises, and too much rigidity can lead to complete self-reference and can drive away people who could take part in it. What are the options for DIY, besides assimilation and seclusion?
Each side has its pros and cons, even though the more hardcore version of DIY that can be found in Greece is the one we support more. Of course, the existence and function of our spaces and our political structures is in danger when we deny any relation or compromise with the state, and of course it gets difficult when you set the lowest price you can on everything—from the releases to the free events in squats—and of course we lose the ability to make more money that could be of real help, for example as a back-up budget for live events in case something goes wrong, or to collectively buy a van. But what we gain is more important, we think, and either way we make do with our own way, like the compilation we've mentioned before, the outpouring of Greek bands in live shows and tours outside Greece, the movement's contribution to solidarity events, and the rich output by Greek bands in the recent years. The way we do things here, doing away with symbols, cultures and relations that exist in the mainstream, in the world of interest, profit and exploitation, and creating open structures with which we help our fellow people, through events we love, and through the real, strong relationships that



"The DIY scene in Greece has fought tooth and claw to distance itself from every relation with commercialism, profits, and mediation."

are formed between us, which are fueled by helping each other and by respect—those things you can't find in clubs and in big record labels. Those are the limits of punk and DIY. It can't change the whole world, but it can change some people and that, for us, is enough!

MRR: In recent years, Greece has been facing the consequences of the capitalist crisis. How is that reflected in the lives of Greek people? More specifically, how is it experienced by people who attempt to fight back and spend their time not only in the means for their survival, but in the creation of structures where ideas are incubated, ideas for a world which won't be based on exploitation?
Disappointment, stress and sadness are the main emotions of the Greek people at this point. Most of them get poorer by the day—except for the few that manage to profit off the crisis—and a large part of the population has to face unemployment. Others work two or three jobs a day, just to survive and pay whatever ridiculous taxes the state decides on. Young people are driven abroad to find a better future, and of course most of the people fight so as to not lose their homes due to debts, loans, debts to the state etc. Some of them manage, but there are many that buckle under all this weight and you see them in the streets, homeless, wandering, crazed, sometimes even without the will to live. The only positive side we see in all this is the admirable work of some people that organize in collectives to create self-organized and anti-hierarchical structures, that aim to support of vulnerable groups, such as shelters for immigrants and homeless people, humanitarian work for refugees, social solidarity medical centers, and mentally and spiritually uplift everyone through collective kitchens, bars, the remaking of unused public places, DIY concerts, etc. You see these people smiling a lot more often.

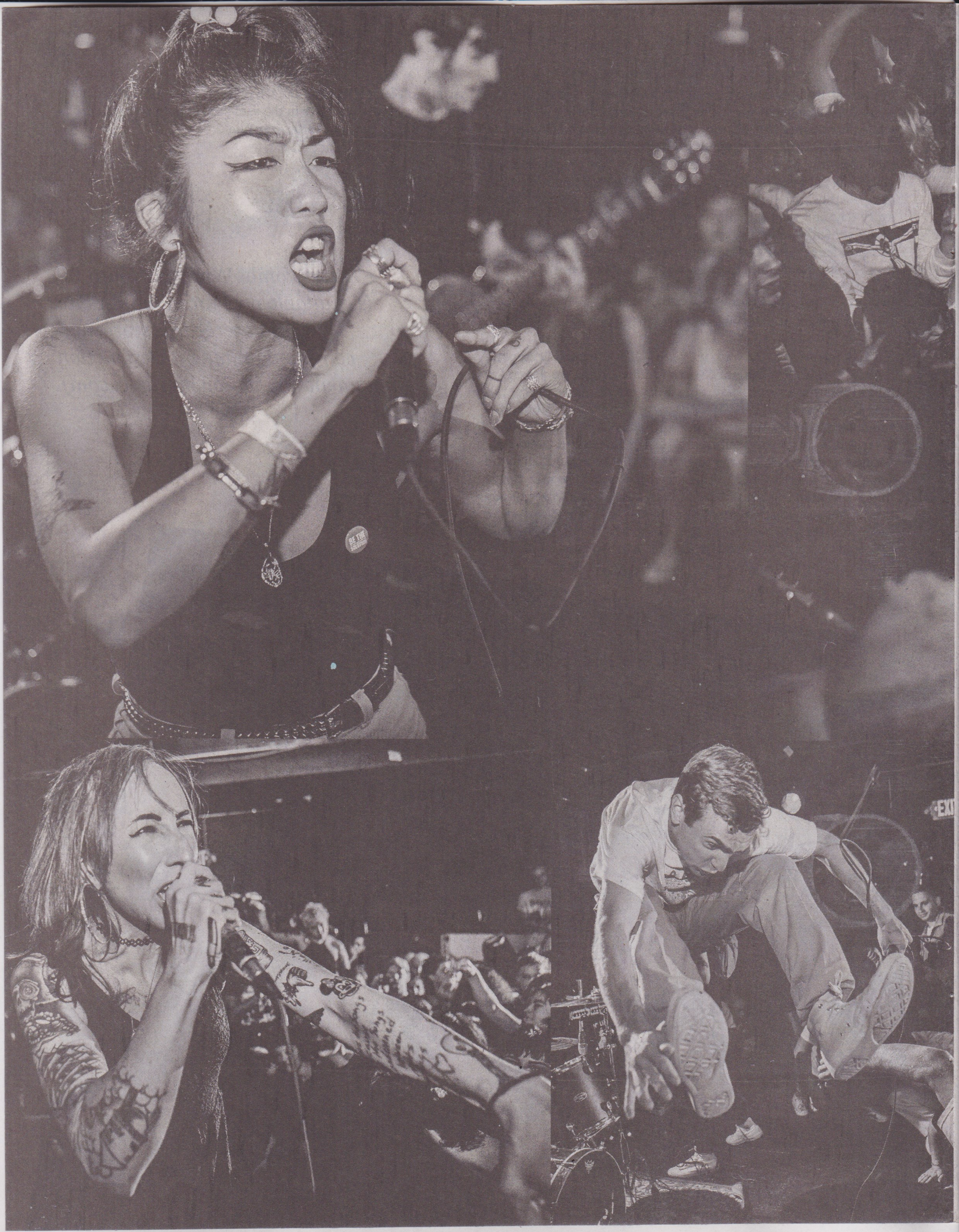
MRR: Apart from its economic situation, Greece is in the center of attention because of its position, as it is the first destination for the people who want to escape from the war in Syria (that is, if they don't lose their lives trying, along with their savings). What's the situation in Greece with the influx of refugees, and what's the stance of the Greek people? What's your opinion on all this?
The situation with the Syrian refugees is indescribable. Europe "of the people" may try

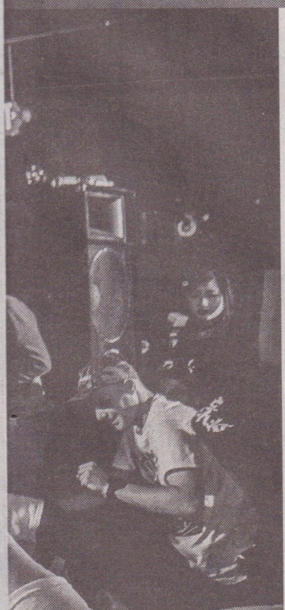
"Disappointment, stress, and sadness are the main emotions of the Greek people at this point."

to present itself as civilized, but it can't hide its fascist side, the same side responsible for the death of millions during WWII, yes, when the refugees reached the same numbers as today. Babies and families drowned, people who face fences and persecution when they cross the Mediterranean, and refugees that are treated like ping-pong balls and are sent back to the hell which they've tried to escape—those are some of the images that reach Greek households every day, and they can only provoke anger and sadness. Greece hasn't shown the racist reactions of other Balkan countries, or of Hungary, for example, but for sure there are a lot of hostile reactions here. We want to believe that the people working every day for the acceptance and the support of refugees are larger in numbers than those who attack them when they arrive with boats in islands and throw pig-heads at them when they reach the reception centers.

MRR: As we reach the end, let's look at the future. It doesn't look so bright, but the hard work for the things we yearn for gives meaning to our miserable lives. After many years, the new season will find Dirty Wombs away from Patras. What does the future hold for the band and for each of you, individually?
It's true that starting this fall, we'll all live in different towns, mainly because a circle is closing, the same circle that brought us all to the same place, where we met, formed the band, and do so many great things together. Our years here in Patras will stay forever in our hearts, but we won't be afraid to seize the days ahead and make them ours. Dirty Wombs won't stop, because a friendship like ours can't end that way. Even with the distance between us, we'll try to keep the flame burning. We already have material for a second full-length release, and we're always hungry for live shows and tours. Maybe we'll live in the same town again sometime, who knows! Either way, you better stay tuned.

Dirty Wombs Wrecked Youth *EP is available now through Desolate (desolaterecords.storeenvy.com) and Imminent Destruction (imminentdestruction.bigcartel.com).*

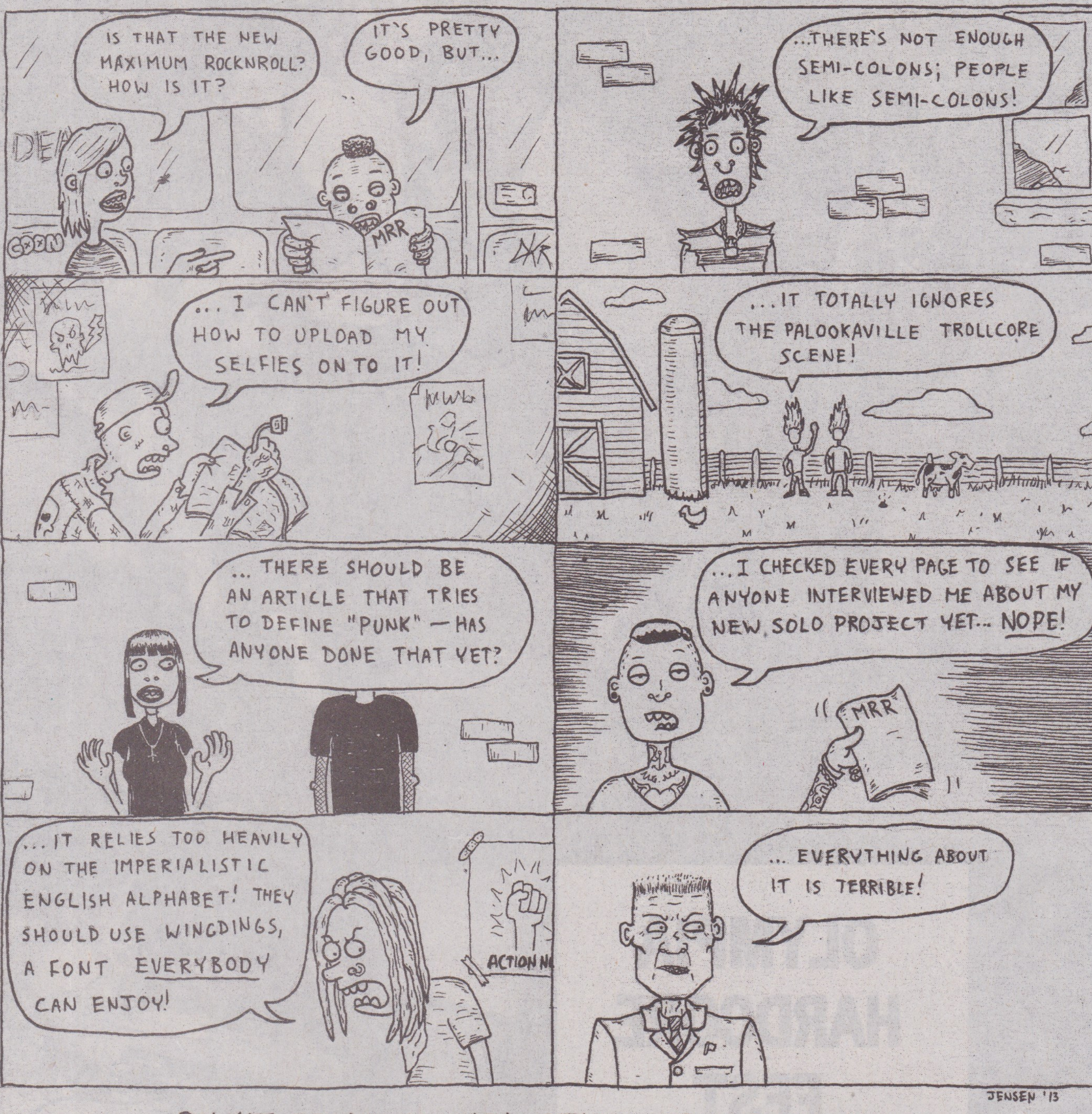




OLYMPIA HARDCORE FEST

PHOTOS: ANGELA OWENS

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KRIMEWATCH, GAG, STUCK PIGS, LOWER SPECIES, G.L.O.S.S.


IS THAT THE NEW MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL? HOW IS IT?
IT'S PRETTY GOOD, BUT...
DEA
GOON
MRR
DKR
...THERE'S NOT ENOUGH SEMI-COLONS; PEOPLE LIKE SEMI-COLONS!
... I CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW TO UPLOAD MY SELFIES ON TO IT!
...IT TOTALLY IGNORES THE PALOOKAVILLE TROLLCORE SCENE!
... THERE SHOULD BE AN ARTICLE THAT TRIES TO DEFINE "PUNK" — HAS ANYONE DONE THAT YET?
...I CHECKED EVERY PAGE TO SEE IF ANYONE INTERVIEWED ME ABOUT MY NEW SOLO PROJECT YET... NOPE!
MRR
... IT RELIES TOO HEAVILY ON THE IMPERIALISTIC ENGLISH ALPHABET! THEY SHOULD USE WINGDINGS, A FONT EVERYBODY CAN ENJOY!
ACTION NO
... EVERYTHING ABOUT IT IS TERRIBLE!
JENSEN '13

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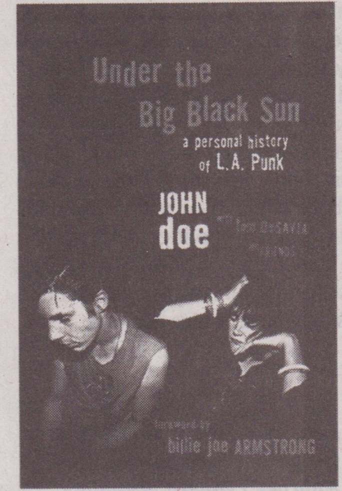

Under the Big Black Sun
a personal history of L.A. Punk
JOHN doe
with Tom DeSavia and friends
foreword by billie joe ARMSTRONG

Under the Big Black Sun
John Doe with Tom DeSavia and friends
$26.99 | 277 pgs
Da Capo Press

As a teen, it was a fairytale I never tired of: once upon a time, in a magical place 3,000 miles away from the east coast, where it was sunny all year long, the water a shimmering blue, and palm trees grew on the streets, a group of freaks made strange, unique music like nothing ever heard before or since. The fairytale was filled with intriguing characters—princes and princesses, witches, court jesters, mad wizards, and villains of all stripes. And there was a tragic but poetic ending—good looking young corpses left behind to romanticize it for the next 40 or so years. To say I obsessed over this story is an understatement. I liked the heavy-hitters, of course, but my true love was reserved for lesser-known bands like the Alley Cats, the Flesh Eaters, and the Eyes. I played my Dangerhouse comps over and over, read every interview I could find, watched *The Unheard Music, Repo Man, Border Radio,* and *Desperate Teenage Lovedolls* on repeat, and still wanted more.

But I think even I might've finally reached my saturation point with *Under the Big Black Sun*, the new John Doe essay collection. It's not that the story doesn't inspire me anymore (it does), it's just that any punk over twenty has probably heard most of this before, and the recent glut of LA punk nostalgia is becoming overkill. It's also hard to sum up something in words that you really had to be there to experience.

The book does bring to light some new and rarer voices from the scene and that alone makes it worth a flip-through. I was very grateful to get perspectives from Robert Lopez / El Vez of the Plugz and Teresa Covarrubias of the Brat, two of my favorite less-celebrated bands of the scene. Lopez captures the spontaneity and humor of the time—"pop-up groups...would quickly form simply because they found matching orange tennis shoes at the Pic 'N' Save Discount store"—and Covarrubias has a great discussion of the importance of the Self-Help Graphics & Art as a Latinx / Xicanx community space for youth.

Less appreciated was John Doe's parallel take on what he thought it might be like to be a person of color in the scene, which taken alongside actual perspectives from POC felt incredibly unnecessary. In fact, my main issue with the book was how repetitive it got (an easy editing fix), enough so that I devised an *Under the Big Black Sun* drinking game. Take a sip of bottom shelf whiskey every time:

1) You hear about Billy Zoom's eerie rockabilly grin.
2) The end of first wave LA punk is blamed on a) Darby's death b) Black Flag c) the Go-Go's selling out.
3) A band member describes their own songs as brilliant, or worse, quotes three pages of their own lyrics.
4) Someone really thought the Screamers would make it

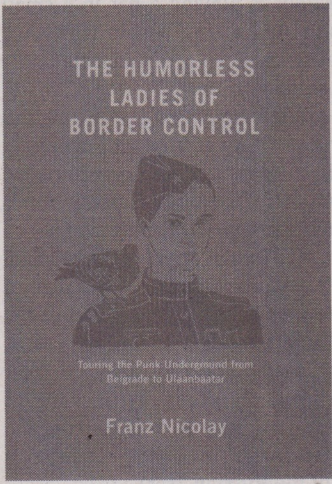
Worst chapter award by a *mile* goes to Jack Grisham of Vicious Circle / TSOL, who comes off like a second-rate Henry Rollins. Mr. Grisham is a modern poet, you see, who gives us enlightened feminist gems like (trigger warning): "The next time I crawled onstage I was a cunt—a syphilitic whore willing to do any trick for the crowd" and "You could ask me whether I could ever live vanilla when I had raped and slashed my way through the soft flesh of a rainbow. I apologize for nothing."

I know not to expect much from a guy who wrote Code Blue, but I still expected John Doe to have the good sense not to include this bullshit.

Thankfully it's not all bad. Mike Watt delivers a predictably endearing chapter about D. Boon, Raymond Pettibon, and the Minutemen that is nothing new if you've read *Our Band Could be Your Life* but nails humble and genuine in a way that translates really well to the page. You can tell this guy *gets it*, that there is not much that could corrupt him or change his ideals this many years on. He will still thank D. Boon's mom, write in all lowercase and quote Popeye the Sailor alongside Emma Goldman. He also gives us some of the simplest but best summations of the scene: "There were a lot of characters in those days and I loved it. Old punk was about people."

Pick up *Under the Big Black Sun* for the great photos, perspectives on the East LA scene, and couple of solid essays. Then stop lamenting what's lost and go make some new noise.

—Arielle Burgdorf


THE HUMORLESS LADIES OF BORDER CONTROL
Touring the Punk Underground from Belgrade to Ulaanbaatar
Franz Nicolay

The Humorless Ladies of Border Control
Franz Nicolay
$26.95 | 384 pgs
The New Press

You can travel for many reasons, including boredom with home, curiosity, and to stand in places you've read about and ponder the differences between what you know and what you are currently experiencing. If you're a "professional touring musician," you travel and play because it's your job and it keeps you in pants. Franz Nicolay was definitely out to support himself by touring through the former Eastern Bloc, but clearly money was not the prime motivator (one does not get rich touring relatively cash strapped countries when much richer ones are nearby).

As Nicolay lays out in the beginning of his book, he has long been fascinated by the Balkan and Eastern European areas and longed to explore them. It's an area of the world that's not well trod ground in punk touring. Nicolay is an old hand at touring and—previous to touring with his own music—was in such groups as World / Inferno Friendship Society, the Hold Steady, Guignol, and (briefly) Against Me!. Thus, there is no romanticization of "going on tour," no wild partying in these pages, none of the capering and madcap shenanigans we often associate with punks on tour. Rather, Nicolay journeys from town to town in rapid succession and sometimes the flow of places and people can seem rushed—especially the second section, covering Hungary, Poland, Romania, and most of the Balkan area. But the reader can forgive the quick flow of places given how much Nicolay clearly read about each area, sprinkling the pages with a gripping amount of history.

The Humorless Ladies of Border Control is more a book about a Nicolay's travels and observations than a book about touring per se. He does not spend too much time on himself and writes relatively little about the shows he plays—which is nice because it lets what could be another dull catalog of nights none of us were at become something far more interesting. It does not leave you with the fantasy of grabbing up a guitar and going on the road to "stake your supper on songs," but it does feed the interest of those who wish to get a recent, "on the ground" viewpoint on politics and life in the former Eastern Bloc, warts and all.

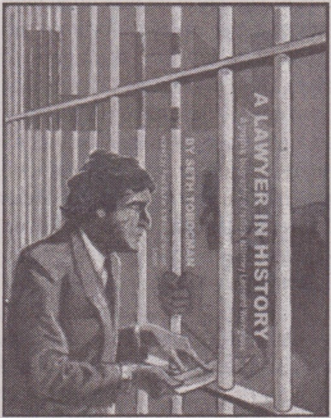
Nicolay does not attempt to make his book seem authoritative, but shows the opinions and viewpoints of regular people alongside rich quotes by the likes of Tolstoy, Rebecca West, Paul Theroux, Proust, Robert Kaplan, and dozens others. Nicolay overlays the complex tapestries of the forces that shaped the regions he visits and captures the grandeur of both the distances he crossed and the depth of roots people have. Local history in much of these areas can stretch back to a proud but small connection to the Roman empire (in the case of Cluj, Romania) or to an ancient "hero" of Mongolia—Genghis Khan—captured in a 150 foot tall statue in Ulaanbaatar. Recent headline news also intersects with Nicolay's travels, when in the third section he travels through war-torn Ukraine, where the celebrated EuroMaiden protests brought down a corrupt and Russian leaning government and spurred on the outbreak of hostilities between Ukrainian nationalists in the West and Russian forces mixed with their sympathizers in the East. These events, unsurprisingly, shook the nation deeply and everything Nicolay and his partner Maria encounter falls in their shadow—including when Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 was shot down by Russian Separatists in Eastern Ukraine while the book's author is playing a bar in a small town in Western Ukraine. He goes around asking people what they think about the incident and reactions reveal deep pessimism about the future yet strong zeal for one's own group / nation.

Throughout the book there is a strong element of pessimism and hopelessness that people feel towards the very corrupt and revolving door governments they live under, institutions that fail to accomplish much beyond monument construction and siphoning off public funds for personal use. This is a world of in the shadow of dictators and police states, "free market" kleptocracies, and ethnic rivalries stretching across centuries. The deep marks left by corrupt and powerful men of the past are everywhere, be it in the freakishly opulent estate of the deposed Ukrainian leader, complete with a "scale model of the castle, in a gazebo-sized cage for hamsters"; or the towering statue of Peter the Great in Moscow (which was allegedly originally a statue of Christopher Columbus that the US refused, Puerto Rico passed on, and the corrupt former mayor of Moscow bought under the condition it could be altered to bear the likeness of the Russian Tsar).

The Ukrainian young people stand out in this book as the least pessimistic, and their frontline struggle to push over their government at the EuroMaiden is inspiring, even though no one Nicolay meets seems to have much hope for anything coming out of it. The people captured in this book have lived long enough under a long slog of dictators and their would-be revolutionary counterparts to seem too excited about anything. Always, in the near past or the near future, lurks another dictator to remind people of how foolish their dreams were. The specter of Russian aggression, be it in the Soviet Era or Putin's muscular foreign policy today, haunts the world captured in this book. Much of the history of this region is a history of maps redrawn by conquerors, begging the question of not *if* but *when* the current maps will become obsolete. It's hard not to sympathize with the pessimism of everyday people in these pages, as it is also hard not to find more than a little humor in the punks here.

Nicolay is doesn't pull any punches about the punks. He makes a little fun when he can of crusties (who doesn't?) and calls out the seemingly international uniform of kids at shows (dudes with no socks and slip on Vans shoes), but he clearly cares enough to talk about local punk histories he encounters. Similar to many places in the world, he encounters some elements of an older generation of punk who started off trying to rip at the systems they lived under and became instead extreme right wing zealots (Edward Limonov in Russia was perhaps the most colorful example of this in the text). The rise of right wing and fascist politics is a terrifying element haunting the punk scenes Nicolay crosses through (the brief part about the history of the swastika in Russian punk might be worth the book alone). And yet he also finds many young people who are looking towards DIY politics and actions to help improve their communities. The book closes on Nicolay proposing that this DIY punk approach offers some hope on how people can build better lives, or at least enjoy the ones they have, a nice endnote.

—Kenn Suto



Len, A Lawyer in History: A Graphic Biography of Radical Attorney Leonard Weinglass
Seth Tobocman (Author & Illustrator); Paul Buhle (Editor); Michael Smith (Editor)
$19.00 | 200 pgs
AK Press

In Seth Tobocman's latest graphic novel, he takes on the life and legacy of radical attorney Leonard Weinglass. Throughout its eight chapters, Tobocman chronicles key cases in the career of a criminal defense lawyer who spent decades defending people "against the machinery of the state," as Weinglass once put it. And while it is obvious that Len was a very special person and gifted lawyer, it is more of a portrait of the time—his career is used as a lens to view some of the most important dissenting movements against the US government through the 20th century.

This glimpse of 20th century history begins by giving us some useful background about the man who would eventually confront the American political and legal system at its worst. Leonard Weinglass was born in Bellville, New Jersey in 1933 to a Jewish family of modest means. He had always done well in school, and eventually made his way to George Washington University and Yale Law School, followed by a brief stint in the Air Force due to the draft. Leonard then began working at some fancy law firms, but for reasons not totally mentioned in the book, he disavowed this lifestyle. For the rest of his life he then devoted himself to revolutionary work, moving to Newark (Newark's first gentrifier perhaps?) and taking on low paying cases dedicated to good causes.

The first of these causes is the chapter "Witness to Newark," where Len begins his politicized career defending a mix of black and white activists, community organizers, and rioters. This segment also begins

Tobocman's funny and insightful illustrations of important dissent at the time. It is less about Weinglass as a person in Newark, but rather the overall political climate at the time, giving voice to what might be a forgotten example of police brutality and racism, as well as inspiring community activism.

Here we learn Leonard had found a calling in life—representing radicals—and it continues in "Protest without Permission," the first of Len's high profile cases, defending Tom Hayden of the SDS and what was known as the Chicago 7. This is a slightly meandering and confusing attempt to briefly describe the events in Chicago during the summer of 1968. Admittedly this is a tough task to take on, as Tobocman lists countless source material in his author's notes and even laments the difficulty of "cutting through the magnificent subjectivity of these accounts." It reads as a jumbled mix of many people's stories, with a oversaturation of people, names, places, and actions that are hard to keep up with unless you are already deeply familiar with this particular chunk of the '60s.

The chaos of this chapter led me to think that perhaps a comic is not the best way to depict very complicated legal procedures and the endless complications of protest, but luckily some cases work better than other. Tobocman shines in his succinct summary of the Pentagon Papers case, as Len defends American icon Daniel Ellsberg. To this day, Ellsberg remains famous for leaking massively confidential government documents which shed light on the US government's unconstitutional crimes in Vietnam and their desperate attempts to cover them up. The case is particularly relevant in 2016, and a foreboding reminder of the current state of surveillance in the US. Tobocman astutely uses this opportunity to bring up fellow whistleblower Chelsea Manning who has not been quite as lucky. She currently languishes in prison for her similarly courageous leaks of criminal wrongdoings by the state, even with the best lawyers in the biz. Chelsea is still suffering in solitary, and is of course being punished for trying to affirm her gender identity. However, the case of Daniel Ellsberg can perhaps give us hope, and can serve as an important reminder of what activism and support can look like for those on the inside. When Leonard asks, "In a democracy, does the public have the right to know what the government is doing?" the words still ring true, and I appreciate Tobocman's astute and contemporary telling of the trial.

The book continues with my favorite chapter, the largely unknown and essential tale of Len's work with the Native American Jimi Simmons. This story, to quote Tobocman's notes, is a "Disney fairytale for those of us too world weary to believe in Disney fairytales," and the book is worth reading for this chapter alone. It chronicles the life of Jimi who, from a young age, was taken away from his tribe and family by the state, only to inevitably be shuffled through foster care and the prison system. A riot broke out when he was locked up in Walla Walla, and a corrections officer ended up dead via stabbing. Jimi had been framed, and with a legal team of Len Weinglass and devoted volunteers, his case takes a both surprising and inspiring turn. No spoilers, but it's a beautiful story and if you don't end up crying by the end of it I don't want to imagine what's wrong with you.

Indeed, Tobocman does a nice job of balancing rousing victories with the tangled history of state repression. The book has its heartwarming moments, but thankfully doesn't spend too much time dwelling on "hope," but rather the hard work of one dedicated person who paired with countless others in the collective struggle. Len famously noted that he wanted to spend his time "defending people who have committed their time to progressive change," and I'm curious what led Tobocman to highlight these particular radical cases. One conspicuously absent part of the story is Len's work with the "world's most famous prisoner," world famous author and former death row inmate Mumia Abu-Jamal. This is probably the most polarizing high profile case that Weinglass was ever associated with, from which he was fired in 2001 with no public understanding. Many (i.e. a small and insular group of leftists) were excited for this mysterious cloud to be lifted, but unfortunately they (and now, myself included) will have to wait.

Tobocman explains this in the author's notes, writing that Mumia simply did not want to talk about Len at all. The author continues that, considering Mumia's particularly vulnerable circumstances, he did not feel comfortable writing or publishing anything without consulting the subject firsthand, and that as the creator of several other strips with Mumia's creative control and input, he could not go forth writing about something Mumia had absolutely no interest in explaining. I respect Tobocman's acquiescence for a man who has endured far more than anyone should have to, yet am still curious about what Len's fantastic legal brain might have done in one of the most notorious cases of racial injustice of the 20th century. Likewise, I also wondered how he won the acquittal of the equally notorious Angela Davis, who was falsely accused of abducting and murdering a judge in 1970.

Another somewhat absent part of the story is how exactly Len became politically radicalized. We know he spent some time working as an elevator operator in Congress, learning about politics there and in college, but I can't help but wonder how someone so truly devoted to representing marginalized causes could become so woke. Similarly, his whiteness is never specifically addressed in the book, and while I have endless respect for the work that he did, it's important to take a pause to think of the structural inequalities in play here that perhaps enabled him to do so. Weinglass was at the frontlines doing Rev Woek, but part of me wishes there was something that acknowledged that one of the reasons he was able to was because of his own skin tone. Here we have an example of a white person who is on the right side—taking explicitly anti-racist cases for next to no money—and doing what's right with their privilege, however, it's never totally understood *why* he is doing this radically ethical work as someone at the top of the social hierarchy. Yet despite the small hiccups and unintelligible courtroom scenes, *Len: A Lawyer in History* is definitely worth reading. Seth Tobocman himself has been involved in radical organizing for decades, and his sensitive and often hilarious illustrations lend Weinglass exactly the kind of voice he would have wanted. It offers not only a portrait of an amazing person, but also considerable legal strategies to combat the state, in addition to a moving document of nationwide protest and activism.

—Jolie Maya-Althusser

LEARNING GOOD CONSENT

Learning Good Consent: On Healthy Relationships and Survivor Support
Edited by Cindy Crabb
$13.95 | 163 pgs
AK Press

Again and again we find ourselves in this situation—a member of the punk community gets called out by a partner, friend, or lover for something that crossed their boundaries and hurt them. Extending the metaphor in the introduction to *Learning Good Consent*, there are the huge tidal waves, relationships ended and friendships destroyed, but also a million little ripples extending from the event, permanently altering the community. How do we move forward? What tools and resources do we have outside of legal systems and police? How do we (can we?) repair psychic wounds? How do we teach people to have respectful, safe, consensual sex and relationships in a culture that pushes just the opposite?

Cindy Crabb's zines *Support* and *Learning Good Consent* were two attempts to solve the unsolvable. They were present at many punk houses, infoshops, and showspaces that I went to in the early 2000s. They were directly responsible for many discussions, workshops, and caucuses within DIY / anarchist / punk communities and beyond. They gave us a framework and language for moving from pain to action, a crucial resource that collected voices of those often silenced or ostracized for coming forward about rape and sexual assault. I'm so grateful that those zines existed for me and many of the people I knew as a teen, but reading this in 2016 begs the question: what's changed?

Part of me says: so much, thanks in part to books like this making sex education simple and accessible. But part of me also says: Not. Fucking. Enough.

One sign things are moving in a positive direction is the commonplace usage of ideas like affirmative consent, accountability processes, and restorative justice. We've moved beyond consent defined as "no means no" to a continued, positive, freely given, verbal / physical agreement from all partners. Even if this seems obvious to you, *Learning Good Consent* still has plenty to offer. Consent, after all, is mostly about good observation and communication skills, something that touches every area of life. The book contains many lists that are helpful for re-assessing one's own familiarity with consent and particularly as a jumping off point for discussing things with a partner.

There are also some powerful testimonies from survivors and their partners about the experience of living with trauma or supporting someone who does. Be warned, they're heavy; I'd be lying if I said I didn't cry reading reflections such as this one: "[My girlfriend] told me about what it was like inside her head and I ceased to pity her but marvel at her instead. Life had hurt her but she had healed stronger… She taught me what it meant to be a survivor, to actively survive something not once, but daily."

You'll see "consent is sexy" a lot throughout the book, a phrase which was very popular in the early 2000s (the zines came out in 2005 and 2009 originally), but now many activists have moved on to "consent may or may not be sexy, it's mandatory." You will also see different iterations of the "we are survivors, we are all perpetrators" concept, which is problematic for obvious reasons. Yes, it's important to remember that we are all socialized with harmful ideas about how "men" and "women" should act regarding sex and cycles of abuse are a real thing, but we're not all rapists, and survivors will probably hear the statement more as victim-blaming / minimization of assault. Another idea that didn't age well in one chapter is when an author asserts that survivors who abstain from sex or have indiscriminate sex are doing it wrong because, "sexuality is central to the experience of being human. We *need* to be touched, it's just part of being a mammal." In light of asexuality and anti-slut shaming movements this idea feels dated. Some consideration is given to queering the scripts of sexual assault and there are a couple sections about assault in queer communities, but it felt like the beginning of a much longer conversation (perhaps a zine / book in itself).

Aside from those minor flaws, *Learning Good Consent* is a thought-provoking, strong, and well-rounded anthology that everyone can benefit from, regardless of their level of sexual experience. Essential reading.

—Arielle Burgdorf

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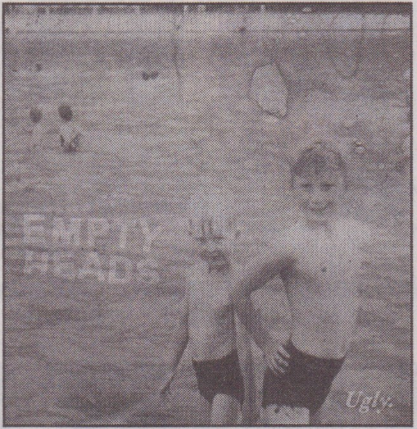

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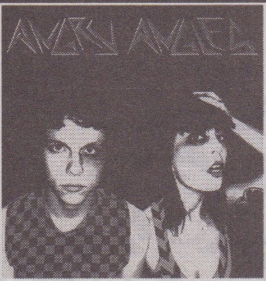

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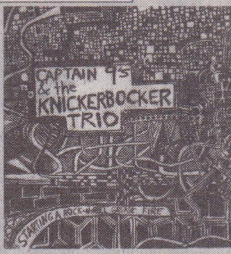
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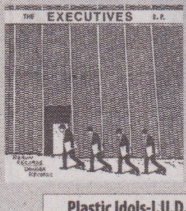
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RECORDS

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(RK) Ramsey Kanaan
(RL) Ray Lujan
((RO) Rotten Ron Ready
(SW) Shivaun Watchorn
(WK) Will Kinser
(WN) Robert Collins

ABRASION – "Crucial Years Discography" CD

Here we have a collection of songs from cassettes and odd format CD releases by Singapore's lunatic powerviolence freaks ABRASION. Most of the recordings are good, and fortunately one is total shit. If your band sounds like this and you don't release something that sounds like complete static garbage, then you're a bunch of posers. This is that slow, then blast, then stop shit. That real AARRGGHH shit. You know like SPAZZ, INFEST, or whoever. I love it, even though I've heard it all before. This isn't going to convert anybody, but if you like powerviolence, check it out. (BA)
(Cactus)

STEVE ADAMYK BAND – "Graceland" LP

Canada has been a real hotbed for quality power pop going back to the days of the POINTED STICKS, but I think that's been especially true in the last few years. If you like bands like the WHITE WIRES or MARVELOUS DARLINGS, this is for you. It's so catchy you won't be able to stop bouncing your head. And it's not lightning fast, but it is delivered at a pace that will keep your attention. It also isn't sticky sweet, which can really ruin some power pop. Get this and thank me later. (KK)
(Dirtnap)

AHEADS – LP

Reissue of a 1981 German punk gem. It seems pretty Anglo influenced with all the lyrics in English, so I'm not sure if it qualifies as Deutschepunk in the conventional sense. Definitely influenced by SEX PISTOLS and the BUZZCOCKS, with some more post-punk attributes akin to WIRE as well as UK82 on the B-side. In some way, it reminds me of Finnish punk of that era, though bands like RATSIA were probably more into the RAMONES than their UK counterparts. This band impressively emerged from a rural small town called Herford and are pretty obscure and forgotten, though John Peel gave them a shout at some point. I totally commend dusting off this artifact from the punk archive. (LT)
(Mad Butcher)

ARMS RACE – "New Wave of British Hardcore" LP

I've seen the term "New Wave of British Hardcore" thrown around for the last couple years in reference to ARMS RACE contemporaries VIOLENT REACTION and the FLEX, and while those bands are amazing in their own way, this seems to be the culmination of that idea. It exemplifies the best aspects of all those bands, distilling the grit of city life in to two sides of blistering 45 rpm hardcore. The thing is, this is a very "city" record. It has a lot more in common, stylistically, with AGNOSTIC FRONT, then say YOUTH OF TODAY, or other bands from suburbs of New York (if we're using NYHC as an example). The recording and production reminds me of LIFE'S BLOOD, but with a guitar crunch at parts that I can only describe as the tone used by DISCLOSE. This is definitely on my top ten list for the year. It's crushing. (MW)
(Painkiller)

JAMES ARTHUR'S MANHUNT – "Digital Clubbing" LP

Arthur's rep is unshakeable: chief scree executive for FIREWORKS, NECESSARY EVILS, A FEAST OF SNAKES and a whole slew of other infamous boilers, so I'm on-board just lookin'. Fortunately, *Digital Clubbing* delivers beyond any diehard's expectations. With help from GOLDEN BOYS and OBN IIIs personnel, Arthur jets further out than ever, augmenting the aggressively mangled rock'n'roll he's known for with psych-punk shards à la MONOSHOCK and heavy HAWKWIND channeling. The drive heard on a tune like "Chain" causes exhaustion, but that doesn't stop me from playin' it over and over again. Genuine and unbridled shit here, punks. A sure-fire entry on my 2016 best-of list too. How do you say "Goddamn!" in Martian? (MC)
(12XU)

BAD FUTURE – LP

Claustrophobic and damaged tunes from Seattle, probably not like any of the punk you're used to putting on. The strained vocals and persistent drumming (lots of snare on the upbeat) produce a lot of tension that never really releases. This is both off-putting and interesting. The few melodic guitar moments could be compared to mid '80s stuff like MARGINAL MAN or even HÜSKER DÜ at times, but with more rock production. I even hear a '90s Ebullition hardcore sound in there, though I believe it's coincidental. Lots of treats for those who like to point out the riffs and crazy drum beats. (MA)
(Dirt Cult)

BAD SPORTS – "Living With Secrets" LP

For some reason, I've never given these dudes a spin, even though a couple of them are in one of my favorite bands. Is this the record to

start with? I'm not sure, but this is where I am. BAD SPORTS play melodic punk with elements of simple rock in the style of all of those Denton bands (MARKED MEN, the REDS, etc.). It sounds like all three members sing and bring their own different styles to the table, which is cool but also makes the record feel a little disjointed at times… especially on side two. Most of the lyrics are simple and blunt (and in the case of "Pacify My Love," cringe-worthy). All of the songs have a good hook and are catchy, but it never feels like enough…like it's missing something that I can't quite put my finger on. It's all finely crafted, but there's not a banger in the bunch. (GH)
(Dirtnap)

CRAIG BELL – "AKA Darwin Layne" LP
This is extremely my shit. See, Craig Bell here was in one of the greatest *pre-punk* bands in history, the MIRRORS, and anything those bumbling cretins touches is gold to a schmuck like me. This is a sampler of Craig's songs from the mid '70s to the late '80s and features all the bands he was in during that time, from the MIRRORS to the RHYTHM METHODISTS. Fans of HACKAMORE BRICK, the third VELVET UNDERGROUND record, or any of that Paisley Underground shit will eat this up like I'm doing right now. This shit is for all us soft rockers who wear sunglasses and have never got past fingering. (BB)
(ever/never)

THE BOLLOCKS – "Society Collapse" LP
Malaysia's the BOLLOCKS, have been consistently kicking ass since the '90s. This new LP has ten angry songs equipped with heavy guitar riffs and powerful drumbeats. They touch on themes of media corruption, new world order, pollution, and war. "Death to the Future" and "At the World's End" are crust as fuck and beg for someone to open up the pit. "Media In Craze," "The Truth Never Told," and "Land Ain't Safe to Live" are some of my favorite tunes on this one. Overall, badass record! (DB)
(TanDang)

BONEHEAD – "You" EP
Cool slinky one-femme band from Detroit that creates simple, dreamy bedroom versions of Shadow Morton girl group sounds with a bit of VELVET UNDERGROUND filter. That descriptor sounds like a million bands from a million different eras, and this definitely has that borrowed from somewhere feeling, but rather than falling into the dreariness of cliché it just sounds eternal and cool in both dreamy and bratty ways. Alexandra can write perfect throwaway '60s girl-in-the-garage pop songs. If you dig the DELMONAS this is gonna be up your street. A hazy good time of a 45 for bedroom girls of all genders everywhere! I am mailordering this as I type. (LG)
(self-released)

BORN FOR SLAUGHTER / MYTERI – split EP
Very impressed with the BORN FOR SLAUGHTER side. BORN FOR SLAUGHTER are from Skopje, Macedonia. Nothing fancy here, just straightforward well-played sincere crust punk. Great production with brilliantly full, albeit simple, drumming. Solid riffs and gruesome vocals. These two songs are damn good. Gothenburg, Sweden's MYTERI play a bit more stylishly. I'm personally tired of the trend of epic metallic songwriting, but they do it well with a shit load of grit and barbaric blackness. MYSTERI has a Scandinavian folklore groove (the second of their two songs, *När Historien Är Bortglömd*, is awesome) while BORN FOR SLAUGHTER are more universally punishing, and a perfect example of the genre. (JR)
(Black Against Night / Dingleberry / Halvfabrikat / Schwinigx / Svoboda)

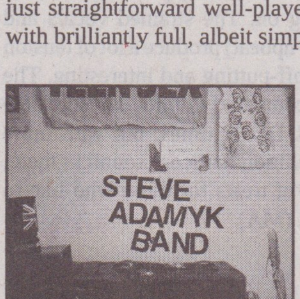
BRAT KINGS – "Hypnopedia" LP
Pretty heavy, trippy, psych-enhanced punk pop. Actually, I'm not giving this record enough credit—it's fucking great! I can't tell if there are two singers, or if there's just one singer showcasing his various styles, switching between a fucked up frantic and manic voice and one that's just kinda rock-y. There's a snoozer or two on here to be sure, but the meat of the LP is some super catchy, dark poppy shit. I really fucking like this. Good job, Canada! (DZ)
(Dirt Cult)

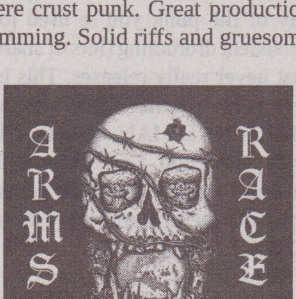
BUKKAKE MOMS – "Thanksgiving With The Clowns" LP
This is some straight-up "Butthole of the Early 2000s" unfocused annoyance rock. It's complete also-ran dross that reaches for Three One G jazz-bozo schlock or Load Records cum-soak noise but obviously never gets to that piss-froth paradise. I suppose 23-year-old me would've given this more play, but I'm 71 now and need to put JAMES ARTHUR'S MANHUNT back on. (MC)
(That's Cool)

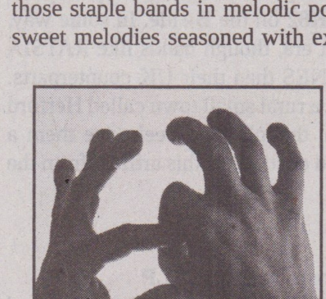
CELEBRITY HANDSHAKE – CD
There's weird and there's weird for weird's sake. CELEBRITY HANDSHAKE straddles the line between the two. You and I know you really can't fake weird. So I am faced with a dilemma. Or am I? The more I listen to this CD the better it sounds. Primitively thudding rock music with rambling vocals. It hits me viscerally, especially when I am not really paying attention. (CK)
(Eastern Prawn)

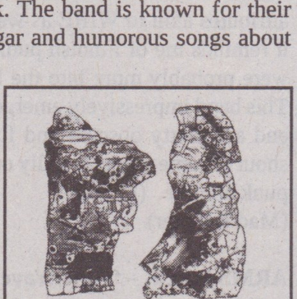
CHARLIE 'UNGRY – "Who is My Killer?" EP
SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS mixed with HACKAMORE BRICK (!). This is a miracle, truly: A good old record, a fine reissue I've never heard before. Real dumb British shit, a beer drinker's dream, bridging the gap between URIAH HEEP and CHISWICK. Listen, this shit sounds like all the good shit that's been reissued this decade by labels like Hozac. It's a killer punk single that, if you like old punk, you should buy. I'm being totally honest with you here. If you don't wanna buy it, fine, not my problem, but I think you probably should. (BB)
(Hozac Archival)

CHIXDIGGIT! – "2012" CD
Over the past 25 years, Calgary's CHIXDIGGIT has been one of those staple bands in melodic pop punk. The band is known for their sweet melodies seasoned with extra sugar and humorous songs about




ARMS RACE
new wave of british hardcore





aka Darwin Layne
Craig Bell

BIG BIG SKY
SAVAGE BELIEFS

summer flings, infatuation, miso ramen, and flirting at day jobs. *2012* is their sixth album and it highlights a full year of the band on tour around the world. Each of the songs is about a different city, mainly about touring Europe, and playing Groezrock, Canada, and some familiar west coast spots. In my opinion, that's a pretty cool concept for an album. I honestly didn't know this band was still around, but I was glad to find out that they are! Apparently they're planning a fall tour to support this release—nineteen songs that blend into one track and all in less than 25 minutes. Check it out if you want to get a punk rock cavity. (DB)
(Fat)

CHOKE CHAINS – "Choke Chain / Mayan Starship"

Chains are cool. Chains are punk. Wrap 'em 'round your boots. Wrap 'em 'round your wrists. Tie your neighbor up with them. This is the guy from BANTAM ROOSTER and DIRTBOMBS' new band with the drummer of the CHINESE MILLIONAIRES. Was never a big fan of any of those bands but the title track blazes with a CRAZY SPIRIT and MOTARDS noisy punker fury. The flip is a slower, almost post-punk (whatever that means) sound with JOY DIVISION guitar fills. Kinda boring but that one song slays. (RO)
(Solid Sex Lovie Doll)

CHOOK RACE – "Around the House" LP

Around the House is the second LP from these Melbourne indie-punks and it's fucking solid. The guitars have this perfect amount of clean jangle that reminds me of *Bakesale*-era SEBADOH, which gives each song a dream-like quality as they flow along. The two genders on the mic blend well together and sometimes work in a way that sounds like a less sex-obsessed VASELINES. This is the kind of record you're gonna throw on when you wanna hang out at home all day and bake a fuckin' pie…and feel good about it. A+. (GH)
(Trouble in Mind)

CROWN COURT – "Capital Offence" LP

Possibly the best modern Oi! / street rock band of late gives us their first full-length. On first listen to side one, I was initially disappointed that it lacked the total punch in the face power of their singles. *I was wrong*. This may be the record of the year. CROWN COURT is the perfect combination of the rock'n'cock'n'swagger of early COCK SPARRER, SLADE, and ROSE TATTOO with the dark menace of COMBAT 84. The album kicks off with the tale of "King of the Skins" and Spurs FC hooligan Sammy Skyves. Tales of violence, political and social unrest, and those bastards that all coppers be are done with well-written lyrical venom. You get glam stomping rock'n'roll pounders like "22" and "Shapes of The Day" and hate-filled thrashers like "Disco Skins." "Breakout" hearkens back to "Anti-Social" and if "Thames Sakes" doesn't make you shed a tear in your pint then you have no soul. I don't know much about them personally but CROWN COURT comes across as the real deal and full of heart. Cheers. (RO)
(Katorga Works)

DEATHGRAVE / ENDORPHINS LOST – split EP

DEATHGRAVE deliver us a nice little package of powerviolence-influenced death metal from San Jose, California. This band can really pack a lot of sick riffs into a short period of time. Their well-crafted doom breakdowns don't need to drone on for endless minutes. They get it done right the first time, and then call it a day. Seattle's ENDORPHINS LOST do a similar kind of thing, except with more of a crust influence. They cover "Don't Care" which adds nothing to the record, but at least it's over in thirty seconds. Overall this record is blast-y, sludgy and filthy, so check it out. (BA)
(Rotten to the Core)

DEFIANCE – "No Future, No Hope" LP

Sick reissue of DEFIANCE's debut LP. They were definitely on the cusp of the street punk movement that became hugely popular (and hugely homogenous) a few years later. While bands like the CASUALTIES embraced a much rawer feel and had many more songs about 40s, DEFIANCE kept it fairly political, leaning towards a decidedly anarcho-punk vibe. For those who don't know, this is anthemic, extremely melodic punk along the lines of the UK SUBS. They even cover ANGELIC UPSTARTS' "Police Oppression," which should give you an idea of what they're all about. (MW)
(Matus)

DEVASTATION – "Got No Limits" CD

Seven tracks of raging hardcore, clocking in at under thirteen minutes. Lots of DISCHARGE, SUICIDAL TENDENCIES (complete with some fancy lead guitar), and a healthy dose of early '80s Nordic thrash, with the requisite unhinged vocalizing. It's actually considerably better than this makes it sound, and well worth picking up. (RK)
(self-released)

THEE DIRT BYRDS – "Everybody Hates Thee Dirt Byrds" LP

Starting out your LP with an instrumental doesn't win me over. Unless of course the whole LP is instrumental. This one isn't. THEE DIRT BYRDS are from Belfast, Ireland. They play a rockabilly-garage hybrid. It is unfortunately too by the book. Add a bit of attitude and something unexpected and I may show up. (CK)
(Time To Be Proud)

DISGUNDER – "Ripping to the Grind" CD

Notice to all grind freaks: Do not pass this up! This is a master class in pure grindcore ripping. Hailing from Japan, these fuckers perfectly blend the rawest of death metal riffage with the unique hash styling of their native brand of hardcore. Like if CARCASS stared out their career as GAUZE. The female vocalist absolutely delivers with unrelenting venom, and the thrashing guitar leads are out of this world, totally shred-tastic. If you want to know how to grind for real, this is it. No fucking around. (BA)
(Hardcore Kitchen)

DOPPLESKANGERS / FLACCID REFLUX – split 12"

DOPPLESKANGERS and FLACCID REFLUX are both from

Galway, Ireland and share many of the same members. Apparently one of the dudes from DOPPLESKANGERS got married and moved away, his friend came from America to officiate the wedding and ended up staying in Ireland for a few months and making music with some of the other guys from the DOPPLESKANGERS under the name FLACCID REFLUX. What we're left with are thirteen sloppy-as-hell songs that would probably sound better if I was intoxicated. I wouldn't be surprised to learn that they were when writing some of them. I mean, they even did a punk cover for the "puppy" song from *The Smurfs*. The DOPPLESKANGERS contribute six songs to the split that all sound different. Some are melodic punk, some sound like CIRCLE JERKS type '80s hardcore, one ska-core song, and a song that sounds like BAD RELIGION. All over the place, but in a nice way. Check it out if you want to learn about fun bands from Galway. (DB)
(Girth)

EARTH GIRLS – "Wanderlust" LP

I'm very wary of using the term "pop punk" in these pages because it carries certain connotations and biases, but I'm unabashedly using it here because EARTH GIRLS is a pop punk band and they're great. On their first LP, they carry each song with strong pop sensibilities that rival those of the FASTBACKS and CUB…and, yeah, the vocal harmonies remind me of those bands too. The last few songs on the record enter into a world that recalls the wistfulness of slower POTENTIAL JOHNS songs. I like that they ram the songs into each other, barely giving you a moment to catch your breath before the next starts…and there's not a weak one in the bunch. You like intelligent melodic punk that is not full of clichés or bullshit? Then get this. (GH)
(Grave Mistake)

EMPTY HEADS – "Ugly" EP

I had the privilege of reviewing the previous EMPTY HEADS 7" (also on Debt Offensive), and let me tell you, this is one of the best pop punk bands putting out records today. Thick, tasty fuzz, touches of SUPERCHUNK circa *Foolish* in terms of the tone of songwriting, and the same general atmosphere that made the first WEED LP so enticing. These guys have it all. It's heavy without being knuckle dragging, sensitive without being maudlin or trite, and goddamnit, it's just plain fun. Raise a Molson (or a Moosehead, I ain't picky) for our boys in Calgary. (LP)
(Debt Offensive)

ENTRACTE TWIST – "Christine Young / Vitesse Constante"

French pounder of the repeat-o-riff fuzz variety. "Christine Young" is '60s, but the right kind of '60s: VU-inspired drive with a ye-ye drip. I'd eat cheese to it any day! The flip is colder, more Manchester than Paris, but they still manage to sound more garage than post-punk, so who's foolin' who here? Two rock solid tunes and a 45 worthy of your hard-earned attention and pocket change. (MC)
(Croque Macadam)

FLAT WORMS – "Red Hot Sands" EP

A true goddam LA supergroup featuring two of the sweetest boys in the whole wide world, Will Ivy and Tim Hellman. Hypnotic punk with great leads and the kind of double-tracked vocals a real idiot like me digs. "Red Hot Sands" is the real standout here, but all the tunes are excellent, driving Medium Punk (not too hard and not too soft). (BB)
(Volar)

FOLK DEVILS – "Beautiful Monsters" CD

This is a compilation of singles and demos from this UK band who existed from 1984-1986. They featured the first singer Ian Lowery from the 1980-ish band the WALL who were on Small Wonder Records. I know the WALL but I'd never heard FOLK DEVILS. This stuff is pretty cool. It reminds me of GUN CLUB, the BIRTHDAY PARTY, and the first ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN LP. Ten singles tracks and eight demo tracks which are different songs from the singles tracks. When this came out there was a lot of UK post-punk and edgy US college rock out there. Too bad these guys didn't break through and become critical darlings like the aforementioned bands. The vocalist passed away in the early 2000s. A great collection. (RL)
(Optic Nerve)

FÖRGIFTAD – "Skit Ska Skit Ha" LP

Here's one for the studded black denim crew. These guys lay down some by the books, good time Swedish hardcore, with plenty of street punk sensibilities. It's got what we all want: plenty of D-beat, scream-along choruses, and a trash surfing, ghoulish punk shooting poo from a slingshot on the cover. This might not be the most exciting thing in the world, but it's pretty dang fun. I don't usually like fun punk, but I guess punk that happens to be fun is cool. (BA)
(Kibou / Modstand / Mono Canibal / Phobia / Svoboda / Urinal Vinyl)

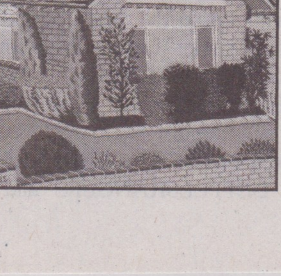
FRAGMENT – "Demo" EP

Blown-out D-beat with heavy reverb on the vocals and drumming so aggressive that it borders of blast-speed at times. Definitely recalls fellow Canadian D-beat warriors TOTAL WAR, KOSZMAR, and NAPALM RAID, though they're also willing to play with the format some, throwing a peachy chugging stench-core riff into the record-ending "Slow Death." A rare example of a demo recording that is worthy of being pressed onto vinyl, good stuff! (AU)
(Imminent Destruction)

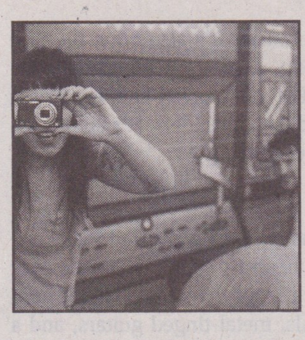
FUN PEOPLE – "The Never Ending Story Of A Third World Band" CD

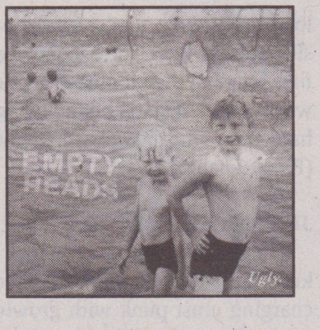
Not sure if Argentina's FUN PEOPLE are still around (though they've certainly been doing it for decades now, regardless), but this is a sort of odds'n'sods mix (apparently put together in 2001) of a couple of live shows, and a bunch of studio covers and remixes. (Absolutely excellent) covers (all sung in Spanish) of the UNDERTONES, BLACK FLAG, the CLASH, ROLLING STONES, and the SMITHS, will give some idea of where this band is coming from. The live stuff is pretty bad quality, but this is definitely worth tracking down for the cracking iterations of "Reel Around The Fountain" and "Stay Free." (RK)
(self-released)

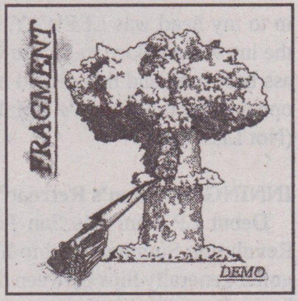
BRAT KINGS
HYPNOPEDIA
stereo



CROWN COURT







FUTURO – "Hábitos Ruins" LP

Delightful garage punk from São Paulo, Brazil, recalling a bit of GORILLA ANGREB but with gruffer, less melodic vocals and more hardcore. One could describe it as Dangerhouse punk meets American hardcore plus rock'n'roll licks. I dig the dual female/male vocals adding texture to this solid release, which is their fourth record since their inception in 2011. The package includes sick cover artwork as well as a lyric insert with seven songs in Portuguese and one in English. (LT)

(Dirt Cult / Nada Nada)

GOVERNESS – "Let Me Be Your…" CD

Driving rock'n'roll à la HUMPERS. They don't have the humor or the panache of TURBONEGRO, but it would appear that that sort of anthemic rocking is what they're aspiring to. Not sure what to think of song titles like "Gayboy Berserkers" or "Bitch Wizard," but the rock is catchy enough… (RK)

(self-released)

GUITAR GANGSTERS – "Prohibition" LP

This was originally released back in 1989. I've got to be honest; this was news to me. Apparently, the band still tours. This is a good record. In fact, it's really good. It's catchy, and flips between traditional style punk rock and power pop with guitar and drums and bass. You can hear influences like the RAMONES, the RADIATORS, the DIODES, and QUEEN. It actually reminds me quite of a bit of the EXPLODING HEARTS and the YUM-YUMS. That said, I would normally question whether this record warrants being re-released 27 years later. As I said, it's really a very good record, but it's not a classic in my mind. On the other hand, the only reason I now know about this band is because of the reissue. That's a pretty good argument in support. And really, it's better than I give it credit for. (KK)

(Wanda)

HARD SKIN – "Greatest Hits Vol. 7" CD

Is a joke still a joke when you're telling it twenty years later? What if it's a *really good* joke? Is HARD SKIN a joke? This is not the time or place to analyze that. This Argentinian CD-only compilation collects tracks from *Fucking Skins, Fucking Punks,* a split with FUCKED UP, *On the Balls* LP, *Do You Like Hospital Food* 12", a 2013 tour 7", and a 7" from 2015. That's 26 songs in all, you fucking punks and skins. You like Oi!? You like street punk and sexy techno? This is (arguably) the only shit you need. If you don't''ave a job, go out and get one so you can buy this CD…in Argentina. (GH)

(Sniffing Recording Industries / Ugly)

THE HECKS – LP

This sounds like WIRE trying to write music for a car commercial, or any British band from that era writing music for a mall. There are alright things here, sounds that are plodding and uncomfortable. They have a habit of playing tiny parts into the ground which is cool but the tone is clean and technical sounding—everything sounds very deliberate, these men sound like they have an interest in sounding / being real pro. They have a few repetitious droning instrumental songs that are very good, like a candy coated hum that appears here and there, or bells rolling down a staircase. If it was an album of that it would be the best. But instead those parts are only punctuations on record of pretty mild "innovative" indie rock. Two guitars making the music of my blandest dreams. (MM)

(Trouble in Mind)

HIRAX / SARJAN HASSAN – split EP

Let's take a look back at the '80s. It was a time of white Reebok sneakers, ratty bandanas holding back long unkempt hair, and fear of nuclear war. HIRAX was there. They probably would have stayed there too if SPAZZ hadn't renewed interest in them in the late '90s. Now, here we are in 2016 and they're still alive and shedding. HIRAX is rad, and they never change. This is the same type of lightning fast thrash attack as their old stuff, with as much energy as a mushroom cloud. They are joined by the much younger yet like-minded SARJAN HASSAN from Malaysia. These guys also offer up pure thrash metal influenced by bands like NUCLEAR ASSULT, SLAYER, and likely HIRAX. This one is definitely for the metalheads out there. Half steppers steer clear. (BA)

(Basement / TanDang)

HOGG – "Solar Phallic Lion" LP

There are many things here that I'm a sucker for—delayed vocals, bored vocals, sounds that could easily be a drill or some other tool, parts that are just fucking noise, everything very blown-out. The bass is very clean and clear and forward and groovy and while I think it's needed and weirdly makes sense, it's not something I really wanted. Kind of puts a goth pallor on everything. Or industrial. We're getting a little SKINNY PUPPY here. Or maybe just what I think SKINNY PUPPY sounds like. It's noisy and weird but basically the same song five times over. (MM)

(Scrapes)

STEVE IGNORANT WITH PARANOID VISIONS – "Now And Then…!" CD

The second collaboration with these longtime Irish punkers and CRASS's lead vocalist. The now is half a dozen new PARANOID VISIONS tunes, enhanced with (the undoubtedly distinctive) additional vocals from "the Ig"—one of which incorporates some "Banned From The Roxy" lyrics. The then is new recordings of PARANOID VISIONS's anthemic "Strange Girl" and three songs from Steve Ignorant's post-CRASS output, one from SCHWARZENEGGAR (with ex-THATCHER ON ACID as the band), and a couple from the STRATFORD MERCENARIES (with Gary from DIRT). Fans of any of the aforementioned will find lots to dig here, with the straight-ahead punk rockers taking a back seat to the moodier more atmospheric stuff. (RK)

(Overground)

IMPACT – "Worlds Apart" EP

IMPACT is a newer band with a similar vibe to heavyweights like BACKTRACK or SUBURBAN SCUM. The first thing that popped

in to my head was LEEWAY. This isn't anywhere near as groovy, but the intro has a *Born to Expire* vibe. Also, I'm a sucker for that bouncy-ass bass tone and this record has that on lock. See these hardcore cats opening for those shows. Spinkick forever. Tiger Style. (MW)
(Not Like You)

INNINGS – "Men's Retreat" LP
Debut LP from this San Francisco trio. The singer has a kind of Revolution Summer yowl to his vocal lines, the bass tone is burly, the guitar generally flips between driving power chords and delay-drenched leads. Repetition is the name of the game, but somehow I wish there was a little more to hold onto here. Rather than getting hammered into your head this one just hovers there and drifts off once you lift the needle. Maybe it's not harsh enough? The rhythms are pretty straight for the most part and the riffs are pretty melodic without leaving room for any surprises that may drag you in. It's more of a loud rock band than a noise rock band. If you think the world deserves either of those things you may want to give this a shot. (EW)
(FROP)

LOS JACKS – "Esperando al Eskuadron / La Buskeda"
These Toledo, Ohio-based Latino punks provide two songs that you will likely feel an urge to skank, mosh, pogo, or tap your toes to. They provide enough wiggle room to make any of those reactions perfectly reasonable. Also, prepare your throat for some hardy sing-along *whoa-oh-oh-whoa*-ing. (RH)
(TPV)

PAUL JACOBS – "Waiting For The Grave" EP
Ace one-man-band offering from this miscreant of Montreal. Young'un Paul may have some kinda bells / whistles live set-up, but this here recording ain't a primitive affair in the slightest. Three complete songs with a focus on patience and atmospherics rather than violent strum'n'yelp. "Ocean City" is the ripper here, an elongated itcher that builds and busts splendidly. No slouch, this 'un. (MC)
(Solid Sex Lovie Doll)

THE JEANIES – "Amilee / Bad Side"
If you're a fan of power pop circa 1979, this was recorded especially for you (and anybody else that likes power pop circa 1979). It's melodic and catchy, slowed down just a tad, and just sort of pretty. The ballad-ish B-side even shows some JOHN LENNON influences. I think it's very nicely done. (KK)
(Hozac)

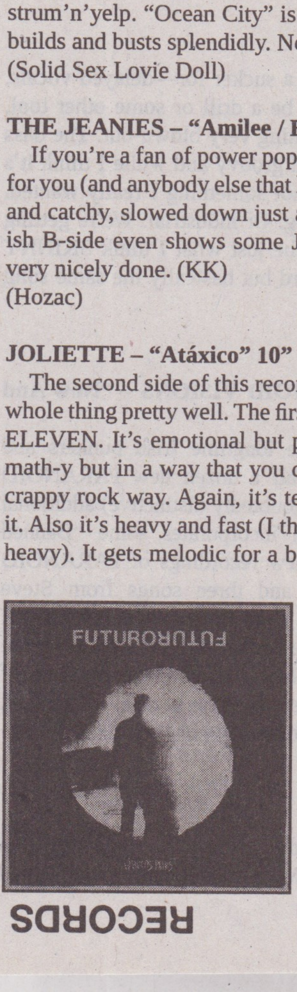
JOLIETTE – "Atáxico" 10"
The second side of this record only has two songs but it explains the whole thing pretty well. The first is heavy and reminds me of VOLUME ELEVEN. It's emotional but pounding in a musical way. It's kind of math-y but in a way that you can still follow. It's shreddy but not in a crappy rock way. Again, it's technical, but you can still totally follow it. Also it's heavy and fast (I think I already said the part about it being heavy). It gets melodic for a bit but that's not the best part. There is a lot a screaming, which works with the music. It's also what the first side sounds like. The second song is long. At times it sounds like the first song but then it meanders, gets kind of quiet, pretty emo but hey, it works. Then it starts pounding again and then meanders. It's emotional hardcore with an emphasis on the hardcore part. (PA)
(Pobre Diablo)

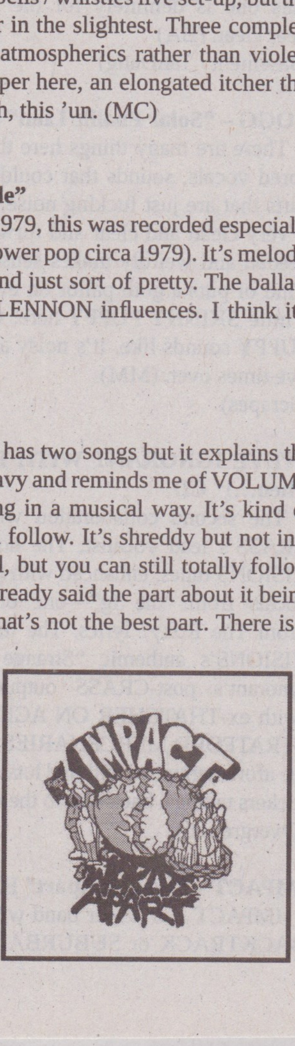
JUVENTUD PODRIDA – "La Naturaleza De La Bestia" EP
This band is from Panama and I honestly think I have never knowingly heard a punk band from that part of the world. This is hard charging crust punk with growled vocals, metal-tinged guitars, and a sense of melody not unlike a lot of bands from a decade ago here in the USA and over in Europe, but here with a lot more metal influence. They have obviously put a lot of effort into their band, which comes through in songwriting and packaging. The songs have direction and distinct parts that blend well for this type of music and the art is very clean and well designed. This looks to be the band's third EP, so some of you out there may have heard this band already. If metallic crust is your music, then this is recommended. (WK)
(Imminent Destruction / Logica Ciega)

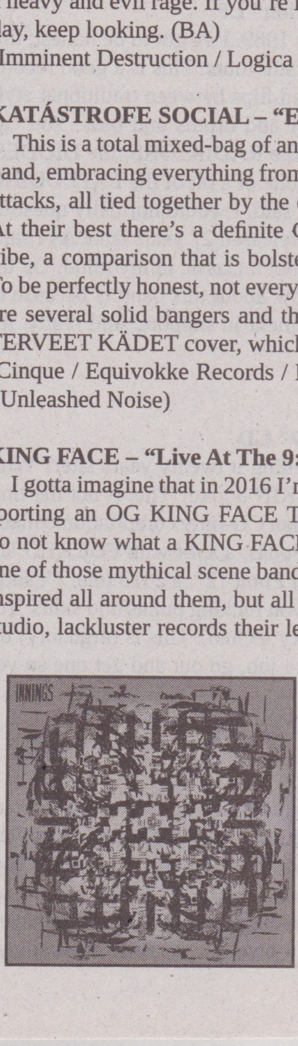
JUVENTUD PODRIDA / S.D.A – split EP
This one is a double behemoth of crust from Latin America. Panama's long standing JUVENTUD PODRIDA drag us to the depths and seal us in with a massive crust avalanche. Cut from the same cloth as bands like MISERY and NAUSEA, this one is not for a sunny day. The long delay on the vocals makes the grim atmosphere nearly unbearable—and I love it. S.D.A, from Peru, have more of a straightforward D-beat sound filled with noise, reverb and grime. There is no sunshine over here either, just thrash-ridden destruction. This whole record breathes a heavy and evil rage. If you're looking for something to brighten your day, keep looking. (BA)
(Imminent Destruction / Logica Ciega / The Return)

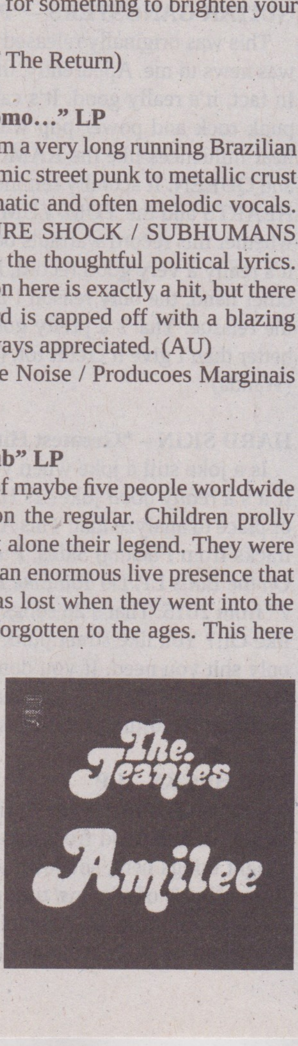
KATÁSTROFE SOCIAL – "Ecce Homo…" LP
This is a total mixed-bag of an LP from a very long running Brazilian band, embracing everything from anthemic street punk to metallic crust attacks, all tied together by the charismatic and often melodic vocals. At their best there's a definite CULTURE SHOCK / SUBHUMANS vibe, a comparison that is bolstered by the thoughtful political lyrics. To be perfectly honest, not every track on here is exactly a hit, but there are several solid bangers and the record is capped off with a blazing TERVEET KÄDET cover, which is always appreciated. (AU)
(Cinque / Equivokke Records / Extreme Noise / Producoes Marginais / Unleashed Noise)

KING FACE – "Live At The 9:30 Club" LP
I gotta imagine that in 2016 I'm one of maybe five people worldwide sporting an OG KING FACE T-shirt on the regular. Children prolly do not know what a KING FACE is, let alone their legend. They were one of those mythical scene bands with an enormous live presence that inspired all around them, but all that was lost when they went into the studio, lackluster records their legacy, forgotten to the ages. This here

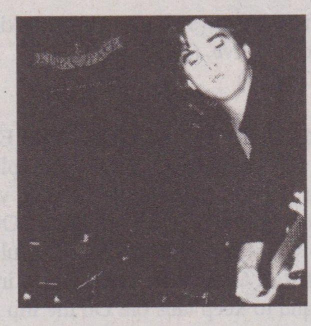


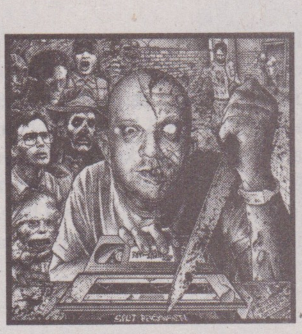






JUVENTUD PODRIDA
S.D.A
SPLIT EP





MAD EXISTENCE

live LP recorded at their prime in 1988 may finally start to set the record straight. DC hardcore fans will note their rock'n'roll swagger, à la their peer group SWIZ and DAG NASTY. It's definitely a sound of its time, so if you can't hang with late '80s Dischord, this prolly ain't changing any minds, but if you've always yearned to hear the real KING FACE, this is almost as good as a time machine. Cool color cover and foldout info sheet. (GB)
(Not Like You)

K-JELL – "Attacked by Fish, Punx, Rain & Rats" LP

K-JELL's new album provides you with an "English Side" and a "Norwegian Side," and they might as well be completely different EPs instead of different sides of the same record. The English language side comes off as fairly generic SoCal-style skate punk, including a token ska song about getting old and another song about how touring is fun because bands get to see their friends. However, singing in their native tongue seems to bring the band out of their shell, as the Norwegian language side is much more emotive and often even angry feeling. I can see myself having an urge to throw on side B every once in a while, but I will likely never hear side A again. (RH)
(October Party)

LAYMAN'S TERMS – CD

Layman's Terms is a melodic hardcore band from Bristol, UK. The drums are mostly fast, the vocals on point, and riffs will take you back to the late '90s. This band was formed in early 2015 and they just released this EP. Here we have eighteen songs that each barely go over the two-minute mark. The recording is really clean and polished but apparently the band spent ten days recording and mixing this shit on their own. This reminds me of a mix between bands like STRUNG OUT and GORILLA BISCUITS. If that's your thing, enjoy! (DB)
(self-released)

LEATHER TOWEL – "Leather Towel IV" LP

A newish Melbourne group of Aarght! Records all-stars, including members from NUN, EXHAUSTION, OOGA BOOGAS, and WOOLEN KITS. Jake from the AUSMUTEANTS sings on this and some of these songs do in fact sound like sped up 'MUTEANT jams with the petulant 'tude dialed up a bit. Songs about shit food and indigestion, all very short and sweet. Other tracks sound like some seventeen year-olds' hardcore band covering the VICTIMS ("TV Freak" instead of "Television Addict," for some reason). There are some fragments of squelching, very fucked-up sounding feedback here and there that I like very much. Though not every song is a hit I see no reason to dislike this other than my usual reluctance to give a band of cool men a chance. (EW)
(Hozac)

LEUKAEMIA – "3rd World Annihilation" EP

A nice reissue of a demo tape from 1984 Eastern England. Their sound is reminiscent of more aggressive anarcho-punk bands like ANTI SYSTEM and INSTIGATORS, especially during the melodic moments. The recording is pretty raw, but with a balanced enough fidelity for enjoyable listening, presumably as good as any tape copy that one could turn up. The lyrics to "Waxworks" are great. Those who give even the slightest fuck about '80s UK punk should definitely seek this out immediately, as it's limited to 250 copies. (MA)
(Proanti)

LURKING CORPSES / TRAFFIC DEATH – split EP

"What is this shit?" says a sample on the LURKING CORPSES side of this 7". Well… the first song is a MISIFTS rip off. Now, I don't think it's possible to do a good MISFITS rip off, but this one is really something else. The singer's Danzig impersonation makes me wonder if this is some kind of joke, but the guitar wanking over the entire thing tells me that this is definitely for real. Their other song is some kind of crust deal, where their singer growls about how they hate HDTV and they want to bring back VHS tapes. "What is this shit?" indeed. TRAFFIC DEATH is better, although it would be difficult not to be. They do a DYSTOPIA kind of thing, but with more thrash parts. It's the type of thing that I would usually like, but I'm just not sure that they really mean it. They're certainly not good enough to make up for the LURKING CORPSES. (BA)
(Give Praise / Vehicular Genocide)

MAD EXISTENCE – "Ignorance is Bliss" EP

MAD EXISTENCE from Richmond combine burly NYHC riffs with gravelly Oi!-tinged vocals for a perfectly fine slab of 86 MENTALITY worship. They're a little harder than the aforementioned—more JUDGE covering BLITZ than NEGATIVE APPROACH covering 4 SKINS, if you know what I mean. "Identity" is a stomper with a pit-worthy breakdown. Not the first record of this style that I'd reach for, but totally serviceable. (SW)
(Vinyl Conflict)

MAKACH – "Enfant(e)" EP

Yes! This is the kind of band it seems you have to go to Europe to find. A blend of melodic punk, hardcore, and even ska (not full-on) at times, full of great melodic and rhythmic hooks. Strong vocals, strictly feminist lyrics, sung in French but with English translations. Every time I listen through I notice something cool I missed before. New favorite line: "*with a blast of clitoshnikov, we'll calm all the douchebags down*." That's right, she said "clitoshnikov." Awesome. Fun record, cool band! (MA)
(General Strike / LADA / Lucane / Maloka / La Societe Pue Prod)

MALCONTENT – "A Conclave of Connivers" EP

Stockholm D-beat with members of AVSKUM, HELLKONTROLL, and other torchbearers. In other words, you know how this cookie crumbles. Dependable metallic crust which will please fans of TOTALITÄR as well as SACRILEGE. It sounds like they have a different vocalist on each song, my favorite of which is the woman on "Passivitet." The record includes all the lyrics to the two songs in English and one in Swedish. I particularly enjoy the spirit of "Millenial Fucker" which brings up to date the opposition to techno-rationalism at the core of D-beat philosophy. (LT)
(Phobia)

MELTAWAYS / WET NURSE – split EP

WET NURSE kick off this blue clear flexi (ugh!) with a mellow rocker which would have easily fit on '90s college radio somewhere between the CRANBERRIES and the BREEDERS. I know, this could come off as a dis, but it's pretty tight, and the lyrics are killer, so I guess I'm totally on board. The MELTAWAYS song is a fast, cheap, sleazy punk ripper. This is such a weird mix of two really great songs. I like it so much that I listened to all their other stuff online and am now a fan of both bands. I love it like a maniac. (DZ)
(What's for Breakfast?)

MELTING WALKMEN – "Vertigo-go" LP

This is, well, post-punk. Sorry for the generic term. Much of it is in the vein of *Pornography*-era CURE, with lots of mid-tempo to slower songs that are dark and pretty rhythm heavy with a bit of a space-y guitar but without overdoing the reverb. The vocals are monotone to a point where you almost want to fall asleep (except at the end of the last song where the vocalist gets really into it and you wonder "where was this when I was listening to the rest of the record?!"). There are some breaks. The first song on the B-side is an up-tempo burner that has a bunch of energy—it sounds like they are some British art punk band from the early '80s and it blows away the rest of the LP. It's a good record with a couple of outstanding songs. (PA)
(Don't Think Twice / Rusted Teeth)

MILD SHAG – "Rat Race" EP

A demo worth pressing to vinyl. Singapore's MILD SHAG kick out six songs of bombastic and abrasive hardcore that's stompy in a mutant pogo sort of way at times while looking towards Japanese hardcore or mid-'80s POISON IDEA at others. They're at their best when they're mid-paced and belting out fresh-sounding, anthemic riffs. The vocals are snotty and cackling and always fit the music well. (DG)
(Imminent Destruction / Kibou)

MODERN ENEMY – CD

Early '80s style US hardcore. Seven tracks on this release from this Southern California combo. These guys nail the sound too. Think the FREEZE, ARTICLES OF FAITH, and MDC. Uptempo with vocals that shout but you can still hear the words. A new band that isn't doing anything new but is doing a decent job of keeping this sound going. I'm sure I'll be catching them opening for an old school band soon. (RL)
(Corpitus)

MODERN SAINTS / DAN WEBB AND THE SPIDERS – split EP

DAN WEBB is one of those bands that have been around long enough for me to recognize the name, but also realize that I've never listened to them before. This split has only two tracks so I'm not totally sure if it's a 100% accurate depiction of their sound. Here they combine some pretty heavy emo elements with college radio alternative. Kind of like combining the abrasiveness and heartfelt nature of SAVES THE DAY with the songwriting style of EVERCLEAR. On the flip, MODERN SAINTS play emo / pop punk very much by the numbers. The songs are super good, but they're definitely colored within the lines. Heavy on the exciting, lacking on the freshness. I bet they totally destroy live. (FS)
(Gunner)

MOLAR / PALE KIDS – split EP

This is a seriously awesome split EP by two new bands from the UK (if that even exists by the time you're reading this). MOLAR find a way to combine early SONIC YOUTH and newer NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS in a style that many would probably liken to the temperament of Riot Grrrl. Both tracks crush in different ways. This is absolutely a band to keep tabs on. On the flip side PALE KIDS give us two tracks of modern sounding punk with roots firmly planted in a BUZZCOCKS style. Super fun and catchy. Can't wait to hear more. Do yourself a favor and grab this record while you still can. (FS)
(Everything Sucks)

THE MOVEMENT – "Fools Like You" LP

Based on the packaging, the MOVEMENT would like you to believe they are a mod band. Jezus, I hope this gets better. I'm one song in and all I can do is hope that the singer clears his voice. Oh, and I hope they find the guitarist, stat. Fuck, this is killing me. Song two has a ska thing going on. The singer still has a throat full of phlegm. It's like LOUIS ARMSTRONG formed a bad ska band. And the drummer has clearly taken lessons. In addition to being bad, it's over-produced. This is terrible. I'll listen to song three. It's on song three, but it sounds exactly like song two. I have to stop listening to this or I'm going to start butchering babies. (KK)
(Mad Butcher)

MUSK – "Musk 2: The Second Skumming" LP

A first quick glance I mistakenly thought the guy on the label of this LP was Holy Mountain Records head honcho JW. It's obviously not him, but what a funny thing that would have been, to put the guy who put out your first record, holding up that very record on the label of your second LP. Keep that in mind for your next record, MUSK. MUSK are grungy, dirty, noisy and nasty. They listen to too much second-era SCIENTISTS and think they are on the Lower East Side in 1990. The singer screeches and hollers. The guitars pulse and squeal. The drums pound primitively. It's painful in the best possible way. You'll like it. (CK)
(12XU)

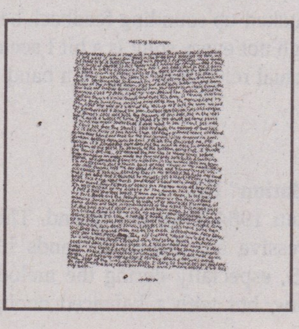
NERVE BUTTON – LP

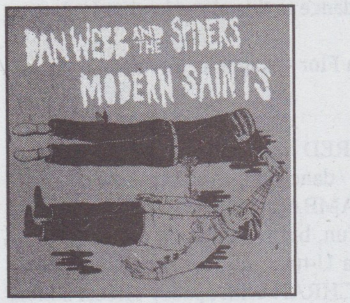
Poppy garage-ish punk from New Brunswick, Canada. The musicality is good. The songs are average. The vocals are way too monotonous. The whole thing needs some type of extra oomph. (CK)
(Wanda)

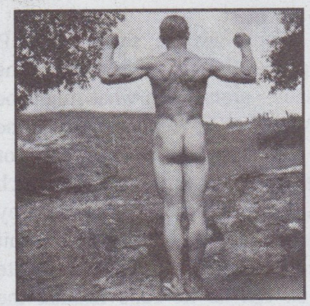
NEUTRON RATS / ROTTEN U.K. – split flexi

Two good bands cover two songs that don't sound much different from the originals on pretty orange flexi plastic. Why? Isn't there some kind of plastic shortage somewhere in the world? Like moms somewhere are telling their kids, "Eat your plastic. There's spikey haired kids in blah

WET NURSE × THE MELTAWAYS




DAN WEBB AND THE SPIDERS
MODERN SAINTS



PAIN DIMENSION
EMPTY ROOM

blah dying to put out a flexi." You get the MAU MAUS's "Society's Rejects" and "Sanctuary" by the UNDEAD done quite competently, if you care. I'm going to melt mine on foil and inhale the fumes. I suggest you do the same. (RO)
(Gremlin Pogo)

OPPOSITE SEX – "Hamlet" LP
Dark, beautiful, and discomforting. OPPOSITE SEX is a New Zealand pop group that combines a wide array of musical influences. At times they have a rock band feel that combines elements of WIRE alongside JULEE CRUISE. Then they immediately switch gears into a piano- / violin-driven spooky cabaret tune that could resemble an AMANDA PALMER song, only to switch gears again to a noisy rock sound the likes of which you could find on early FLAMING LIPS albums. Although I'm describing wildly different genres, OPPOSITE SEX find a way in which to tread these all together. The flow seems appropriate, and it creates a truly original record. Weird music for weird people. Fantastic. (FS)
(Dull Tools / Melted Ice Cream)

PAIN DIMENSION – "Empty Room" LP
I think this is another one person band, this one created by a Parisian garage boy called Thibault. It has a solemn feeling, dark and gloomy minor key explorations evoking claustrophobic alleyways and soggy European streets rather than the sunny beaches of the imagined California that has sort of taken over the modern garage rocker type. Fuzzed out guitar, sneered disdain, desolate rhythms. The A-side has more going for it than the flip, which had a few clunkers cluttering up its grooves, but if you are seeking out some French existentialist psyche garage this might go well with your Camus. (LG)
(Requiem Pour Un Twister)

PARASYTES / SECTA – split EP
Each band contributes two tracks to this seemingly unlikely split between Montreal and Bogotá, released by labels based in Canada, Colombia, USA, and Japan. If anything, this is a testament to the important international connections forged by DIY punk, but it's also a pretty good record. PARASYTES is solid Scandi-style punk pulling from sounds like MOB 47 or NONCENS with booming female vocals. The lyrics paint the scene of the substance-fueled raucousness that Montreal punk can often represent. SECTA from Bogotá contributes urgent hardcore punk with some dark post-punk riffs. They don't follow any single formula and the result is really refreshing and genuine, not to mention they deliver one of the best live shows you will ever see. Lyric sheet included. Punk is still relevant, folks. (LT)
(Discos MMM / Dure Réalité / F.Y.B.S / Rakkos / Rat Trap)

PLASTIC IDOLS – "Einstein Experience" EP
A bit of a surprise seeing *both* PLASTIC IDOLS 45s getting the reissue treatment, as "I.U.D." always shined as their ultimate moment, but spinning this, their second 7", circa 1980 Houston, reminds us that they weren't no one-trick pony. "Uncircumsized Twin" is a comp-worthy Texas punker, and the title track is solid keyboard-driven punk wave making me sweat imagining the newly exposed gaping hole in my collection. I'm even starting to wonder if this isn't their better record?! (GB)
(Rerun)

PLASTIC IDOLS – "I.U.D. / Sophistication"
A faithful reissue of the first single from this early Houston punk band, originally released in 1979. Rerun has really stepped up their reissue game lately with the two PLASTIC IDOLS singles and the EXECUTIVES EP, but I digress. "I.U.D." is a great herky-jerky punky new wave song, but the standout here is "Sophistication," which uses a "generator" to make some truly out there noises. An excellent record well worth a reissue. (SW)
(Rerun)

PMMA – "Serotonin Syndrome" LP
There aren't a lot of styles that have gone unexplored in punk music but if psychedelic synth-driven punk is indeed the next step, I'm all for it. Not saying that some bands haven't touched on this style in the past, but there is so much to explore that hasn't been done yet. PMMA as a band can drone and trip before capturing your attention with fast parts, only to trip you out again. The vocals are sorta snotty shouts in a very Canadian accent. It's not a bad thing—just think of D.O.A. or DAYGLO ABORTIONS. The lyrics, while not all that deep or gripping, are by no means bad. They also trip up on songs that maybe would have been better left off this record for overall feel. PMMA certainly have their moments and I will be interested to see where they go with their sound. Check them out for yourself. (WK)
(Imminent Destruction)

PRE NUP – "Wrong Your" EP
Here's the first effort from this Calgary indie pop band. As far as twee goes this doesn't sound like it's out of the Sarah Records sphere or HEAVENLY trajectory, but maybe a bit closer to JOANNA GRUESOME or something. While they don't dive into the noisy SONIC YOUTH indebted passages of that band, PRE NUP borrows a couple tricks from the modern indie rock playbook: stop-start arrangements, outros oriented around repetitive guitar riffs and sing-alongs. "Air Quotes" features a nice catchy bridge out, breezy and appropriately effortless. There are not enough hooky moments like that to make me rush out and grab one of the 300 copies floating out there, but now that I think about it, that is indeed how people end up snoozing and losing. Fans of SOURPATCH or Slumberland Records clearance sales may want to peep this one. (EW)
(Debt Offensive / Kingfisher Bluez)

PROF. HUGH G. RECKSHUN AND FRIENDS – "The Natives / Cannibal Stew"
These fucking idiots got together and spent real American dollars to put out a record about encountering "primitive savages" in the African jungle. Don't waste my fucking time or anyone else's, you racist shitheads. (GH)
(Greasy)

PURE DISGUST – LP

PURE DISGUST have outdone themselves on their first LP. Musically and in terms of songwriting, these songs bring to mind the more Oi!-influenced early '80s harDCore, along with what might be the after-effects of GOVERNMENT WARNING's frequent stops in the District—their song "No Moderation" is a decent frame of reference for the overall tempo of this record. These songs, though, are very much their own and without retro trappings. Their sound is characterized by thick, trebly guitar, big boomy drums, and simple but huge circle-pit ready riffs that are still played with equal ease in their more intricate moments. Rob's anger can clearly be felt as he rails against the school-to-prison pipeline, cops and other tools of the state, scumbags, respectability politics, racial double standards, the normalization of black death, and white silence in the face of all this, especially from those who espouse surface-level "equality." While this LP listens more like a collection of songs than a cohesive album, no song on here is anything less than great, and "Untitled" shows that they are more than capable of writing an instrumental hardcore track. Get this. (DG)
(Katorga Works)

RADIO BURNS – "One Sided Reputation" EP

Who the hell assigned this to me? Listen, I'm a portly dumb piece of shit but you don't see me trundling around *MRR* HQ in a STITCHES shirt and wraparound shades. This is Detroit rock'n'roll…and I'm a little soft boy who doesn't even drink anymore, so what the hell gives?! I mean, this is catchy and I guess if you like the DEVIL DOGS you might like it? I mean if you've got an old car and are into that particular Alternative Lifestyle, well then I've got a record for you, but if you're a Genius like me then I guess stick to weeping and folk music (my two passions). (BB)
(Solid Sex Lovie Doll)

RAGANA – "Wash Away" LP

A moody and morose acoustic intro sets a pure and natural tone, which is quickly torn to pieces with shrill screaming vocals. A formulaic breakdown is not as abrupt as it seems, as it doesn't last too long and the tunes flow further out to sea with dense heaviness. I'm feeling both the vibes of ANTISCHISM and some pop duo which I doubt RAGANA wish to be compared with, so I'll spare that in this review. The drums are played in an organic enthusiastic style not making this LP too technical for the tense genre it nestles in. Soft rather pretty vocals have a folk-like feel. It reminds me of the VASELINES or VASHTI BUNYAN meeting a black metal project. Really inspired and beautiful, in a sad sort of PRETTY POISON, MARTIKA, SATYRICON way. As the LP progresses it gets increasing good as well. I'm surprisingly into this weird unique album—wish I got a copy. (JR)
(An Out)

RAISED BY ZEBRAS – "Reatomico" LP

This is not the first record of theirs that I have reviewed but certainly the best so far. It's upbeat, energetic punk. It's catchy with a certain pop element to the songs, but it's not a pop record. The sound is big despite it only being a two-piece (drums and guitar). The vocals are yelled, the songs are well-written, you might dance to this alone in your bedroom. Well done. (PA)
(Entes Anomicos / En Tu Kara / La Flor / Magnetic Fever)

RED MASS – "Re-Mi-Si" EP

Another record from the prolific RED MASS that is all over the map. Side A falls into a bit of a new wave / dance vibe that somehow channels ROBOTNICKA and CHUMBAWAMBA in an almost over-processed way. It sounds like it wants to be fun, but it's thinking too hard about it. The first song on side B takes a U-turn and just sounds like basic '60s garage rock, like EDDIE COCHRAN with spacey effects added. It closes out with a straightforward power pop banger that sounds like it lifted the main riff from "Hey Little Girl." It's a disjointed listen, but interesting, if nothing else. (GH)
(Solid Sex Lovie Doll)

THE REJECTERS – "She's So Fine" EP

This EP from Montreal rockers opens with a mid-paced ripper with wailing leads in the JAY REATARD or BRIEFS snotty fake-British-accent style that seems pretty popular these days. The British accent is gone by "Sally Mae," interestingly. This one is a sappier crooner that sounds like Burger Records stuff. Another song is about being blackballed. No lyric sheet, but seems like a pretty good guess. They end the record with a nod to the RAMONES. Come on everyone, do the "Hiroshima Hop." (JC)
(Solid Sex Lovie Doll)

MIKE REP AND THE QUOTAS – "Hellbender" LP

"Rare and Unreleased 1975-1978." Music to my ears! Y'all know MIKE REP 'n shit, no? Mid '70s Columbus, Ohio, acid-fried basement punk scorch. I mean, let's be frank, don't get started here unless you've got some time to kill. Who didn't in Columbus circa 1975? You are in Mike's time zone and this is some rugged ass shit. I mean, lotsa dudes do BO DIDDLEY, but most dudes cannot do BO DIDDLEY forgotten and living alone in his Auntie's basement for ten years, they're doing some BO got the shine bullshit. This is the real shit. They say these recordings were unknown and just recently unearthed and baked. In other words, they just opened an unknown portal to primal MIKE REP and we are just now catching up. What the fuck are you waiting for?! Includes full color cover and pimpin' '70s photo insert. (GB)
(Hozac Archival)

THE RETARDED RATS - "Screams From The 10th Planet" CD

Mediocre rockabilly from Germany. It's very by the book. The playing is OK. The songs…uh. The female singer doesn't have a powerful enough voice to pull the whole thing off. (CK)
(Killjoy)

RIK AND THE PIGS – "Life's a Bust" EP

Two different flavors of guitar scree. Side A is more in the REMO VOOR / FREESTONE school of punksploitation, catchy mania for catchy maniacs. The flip is a sort of Dave E as Iggy droolathon, with the guitar wail from the genius Mike of VEXX adding to the

PRE NUP
RECORDS
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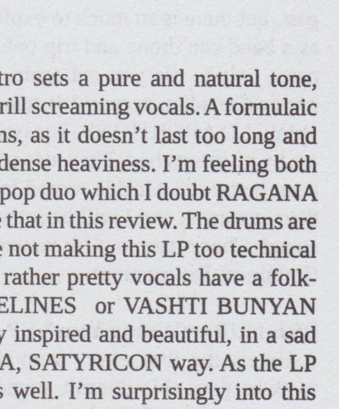
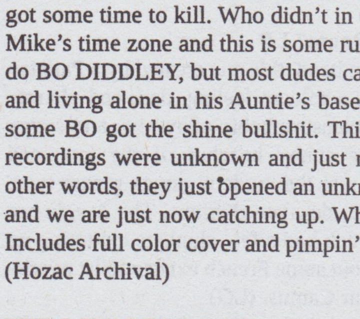
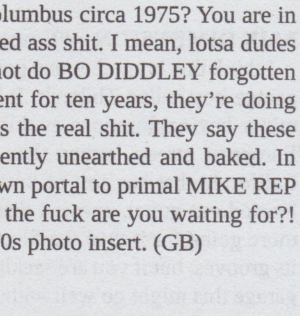
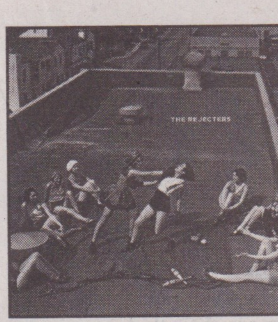
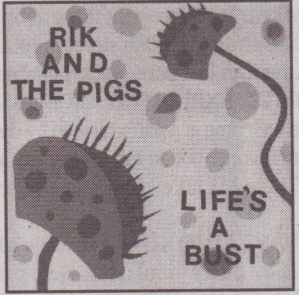
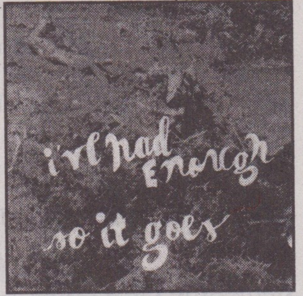












disconsolate odyssey. Each side has fifty tracks of guitar ooze, makes you wanna nod off in front of the telly whilst wallpapering your pad in aluminum foil. (LG)
(Feel It)

RS2 SOLID SOUND – "The Best is Yet to Come / Uflyptodonme"

I honestly have no idea why anyone would waste the time and postage sending us a copy of this shit. This is like fucking yacht rock or something. The only saving grace is that the auteur behind this band is one Ray Stevens II, and I am enjoying imaging that he is the failure son of washed-up redneck musical "comedian" Ray Stevens. Hey Ray: you suck and your old man sucks too. Fuck this record. (AU)
(Not Like You)

SAVAGE BELIEFS – "Big Big Sky: A Recorded History of Savage Beliefs" LP

Talk about some unsung punks. Not sure what it is about SAVAGE BELIEFS, but while the world has been meticulously scrubbing the bins for any and all early '80s punk, somehow Chicago's SAVAGE BELIEFS remain almost totally forgotten. Probably because they pressed too many records and the front cover wasn't a giant crudely drawn logo. This is a posthumous compilation of all their recorded material—the A-side their 1983 7" EP sessions, and the B-side from 1984. They did have a varied sound, ranging from straight up slashing hardcore punk à la their classic track "Big Big Sky" to equally melodic and introspective tracks not unlike HÜSKER DÜ or ARTICLES OF FAITH. The B-side of unreleased 1984 material is a real surprise to me. By then they'd taken on a jangly melodic sound more akin to the Champaign-Urbana '60s inspired pop scene. As a native (suburban) Chicagoan, it's exciting to get the whole story all in one tidily designed package (and insert), but may be a bit much shelf space for those without the same regional zeal. (GB)
(Alona's Dream)

SEX CRIME – LP

The debut album from this Portland, Oregon, band features Cécilia Meneau, formerly of NO TALENTS and OPERATIONS, who has one of the best voices in garage punk. SEX CRIME has a new wave-ish sound with synths and a manic style. The songs are amazingly catchy. The music is played really well, but there is enough wildness to keep it sounding unconventional and exciting. Although I would prefer that Meneau sing every song, the duets with husband Ryan Puckett (ex-EPOXIES) are pretty cool. His monotonous vocal style compliments hers nicely. This is a great LP. (CK)
(Danger)

SEX POWERS – "I'll Rip Yer Fuckin' Head Off" EP

This is some stripped down, fuzzy-vocal, skeezy-sounding, breakdown-having punk from LA. This almost sounds mid '90s to me, like HAIL MARY or stuff on the more recent Rich Bitch Records out of Reno. No lyric sheet but it's apparent that the singer *"is gonna rip your yer fuckin' head off."* A little research and we find that this is the bassist from DYSTOPIA and the singer from LE SHOK. This is scummy, as you might expect from a band named SEX POWERS, rough and mean. "Made to stand up under hard pounding and constant use," as it says on the front. Assume that's a reference to somebody's sex addiction. I like the artwork, which is just a mish-mash of crazy shit and a random quote: "'My life as a pot roast' starring Suzy Pot Roast." (JC)
(Not Like You)

THE SHIFTERS — "Creggan Shops / Captain Hindsight"

One of 2015's better tapes to come in under the radar gets the vinyl treatment, an unexpected but very welcome surprise. Not sure how I left that tape off my Year End Top Ten! It's everything you can ask for. "Creggan Shops" somehow dangles a plucked violin and a melodica line over the same four-note riff in a way that is totally sick and compelling. There are some FALL vibes in the vocal delivery, a more laconic take on the mid '80s MES style à la *Bend Sinister*. It's noisy but all tied together with a crooked ear for bent pop music. Somehow the B-side only gets better, pulling in turn from self-titled-era VELVET UNDERGROUND and the REBEL. Only complaint: this tape only collects the first two songs from the whole nine-song demo. America demands more SHIFTERS! (EW)
(It Takes Two)

THE SHIVAS – "I've Had Enough / So It Goes"

Long running Portland garage / psych rock group straight outta that Burger / Gnar school of doin' things. "I've Had Enough" has a melancholic Toody Cole feel, that jagged vocal really sealing the deal. The flip side is a sloppy ride through a summer day coming to a close. This is alrite, but I wish there were a few more hooks—it's more sorta background choogle for modern heads. They've been a band since they were teenagers, over ten years, which is kind of cool, but I sorta want more as a result. There's no there there…Why choogle gently when you can transcend reality? I wish modern psych / garage groups would take hints from the INDEX LP or SILVER APPLES you know? This gentle amble through college radio circa 1974 is nice but not distinctive. (LG)
(Casino Trash)

SILVER ABUSE – "Consider The Pigeon" LP

Thee aged punks of Chicago just keep on giving this month! Anyone familiar with Chicago punk rock of yore and the ol' Busted At Oz scene is surely familiar with SILVER ABUSE. Beyond that 1982 comp appearance, they never got around to releasing a record until punk was played out and everybody was branching out into weirdo territories. After a several decades long hiatus, they've gotten back together a few times, but unlike most of their reunited peers, they're doing both OG material plus new material. This is a brand new SILVER ABUSE LP recorded in 2016, with some crowd pleasers like their OG version of "Surf Combat" (later usurped by former SILVER ABUSE member Santiago Durango with NAKED RAYGUN), punker "My Dog Spot," and a shredding PERE UBU cover, but thoroughly branching out into weirdo no wave zones in that quintessential Midwestern spirit of art punk. I went into this with low expectations, but this is pretty friggin' great, and sequencing works the disparate range of material in. (GB)
(Alona's Dream)

SIR COYLER & HIS ASTHMATIC BAND – "Don't Shake" CD

Sweaty palms / angst / brain fuzz / swagger trash / Ty Segall / shake / heavy reverb / steady throb / boom-boom / surf / punk / garage / JON SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION / OBLIVIANS / HOT SNAKES / etc. (CR)
(Five Five Hole)

STEVE AND THE NEUROTICS – "The End Of Life As We Knew It" CD

For starters, this has nothing to do with Steve Drewitt and the NEWTOWN NEUROTICS, in case you were wondering. This is a solo release from the vocalist/guitarist from SHOWER WITH GOATS. This was recorded demo style with one person recording all the guitars and bass as well as all the male vocals. There are a few duet tracks with his wife. Unfortunately, the drumming is by a drum machine. With 20 tracks there is a lot of variety here. Some of it is quirky, some of it is sweet, some uptempo pop punky style songs, and some indie rock-ish type songs. The vocals have an off-key effect at times, which isn't helped by the sparseness of the recording. Having gone through the loss of a parent, the singer certainly has some very heartfelt songs here. If you are a fan of SHOWER WITH GOATS, check out its leader's new material. Otherwise this doesn't hold up to releases recorded by a whole band (which I understand wasn't an option here). (RL)
(self-released)

SUNSHINE WARD – "Order" 12"

Stomping hardcore from Boston that seamlessly blends a studded jacket punk attack with touches of Oi! and D-beat. SUNSHINE WARD are equally adept at a POISON IDEA-style blazing solo, a sinister bass-led BLITZ churn, and a frantic DISCHARGE driving groove. Ten quick tracks with nary a stinker in the bunch. Top shelf stuff, as expected from a release by Feral Ward (AU)
(Feral Ward)

SUSAN – "Never Enough" LP

I saw SUSAN play in Seattle a summer or two ago. They played in some old gutted restaurant that had a small stage in the way back. It had about 60 years worth of lumpy peeling paint on the walls, and an even weirder mix of people at the show. Out walked SUSAN in matching sparkly sequined outfits, looking ethereal like shiny silver disco balls, effortlessly kicking out melodic sun-drenched LA post-punk in a dreary sea of beards and flannel. This is what their music sounds like. It's like glitter in a sea of dreariness. Ethereal harmonized vocals echo through "Same Old Song" and "Ancient History." Gingerly plucked guitar solos are sprinkled over "Jealous Heart" and "With the Windows Down," circling the earworm melodies. SUSAN mixes PEACH KELLI POP, LA CERCA, and the dreamy new wave psych punk of COLD BEAT. (CR)
(Volar)

THE SUSPECTS – "Voice Of America" LP

This is a beautifully packaged rerelease of this '90s DC band's LP with 7" tracks included, thanks to the fine folks at Grave Mistake and Six Feet Under. If you're a longtime fan or a new convert you will be stoked. Do I know anything about this band? Not a goddamn thing. They have strong English street punk influence with some ham-fisted good ol' American hardcore guitar punches thrown in. CAPITOL PUNISHMENT, BLITZ, EXPLOITED, UK SUBS, BLANKS 77, and RANCID would all be welcome at a party thrown by these yobs. There're a lot of songs here. Not my favorite but an interesting artifact. (RO)
(Grave Mistake / Six Feet Under Records)

SVAVELDIOXID – "Ändlös Mardröm" LP

So many umlauts! Self-proclaimed Swedish käng revivalists SVAVELDIOXID grace us with a little more than thirteen minutes of devastating D-beating hardcore that definitely recalls DISARM, ANTI-CIMEX, and TOTALITÄR filtered through a modern lens. The soloing is a little bit busy for the style, but that's more of a plus than a minus, as it provides the band with a little bit of an identity of their own. The hoarse, flat vocals recall early DRILLER KILLER, the drums gallop effectively and the bass sound is gnarly, tuned to nearly sub-sonic levels. If this is the käng sound of 2016, I'm totally fucking down. (AU)
(Konton Crasher / Phobia)

THING – LP

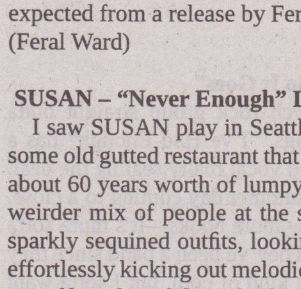
Outta-the-ash imprint Solid Sex Lovie Doll (!!!) brings us the debut LP from the new RICH CROOK outfit, THING! THING's what's happenin' after LOVER! and KNAUGHTY KNIGHTS, for those of you keeping score. It's hard not to be won over by songs as catchy as Rich's: pure earworm punked-up pop music, reminiscent of M.O.T.O with its vaguely nonsensical and off-the-cuff lyrics, tuff down-stroke HEAD worship and faint flourishes of big '80s new wave. Irresistible, I say, especially considering the scarcity of poppy clingers on the market these days. THING's the thang for you! (MC)
(Solid Sex Lovie Doll)

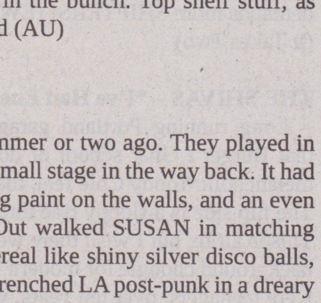
TOXIK EPHEX – "The Adventures Of Nobby Porthole The Cock of the North" LP

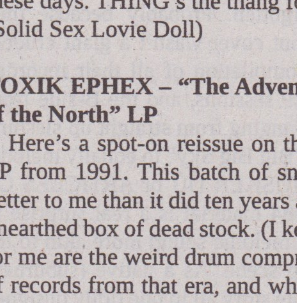
Here's a spot-on reissue on this Scottish anarcho-punk band's sole LP from 1991. This batch of snappy tunes with clever lyrics sounds better to me than it did ten years ago when I sent off for a copy from an unearthed box of dead stock. (I kept the first single though.) Drawbacks for me are the weird drum compression qualities that you hear on a lot of records from that era, and when they screw around with traditional melodies like in "Maggie" and "Bonnie Wee Jeanie McColl." Most of the songs on here are great though. I think this band has eluded many newer punks interested in old punk from the island, maybe due to lack of reissues. They definitely remind me of THATCHER ON ACID, but way more punk sounding. *"In the name of social control you waste your life in slavery and spend it on the dole, and if you're unhappy with the choice, they'll throw you in a prison cell where no one hears your voice."* (MA)
(Mad Butcher)

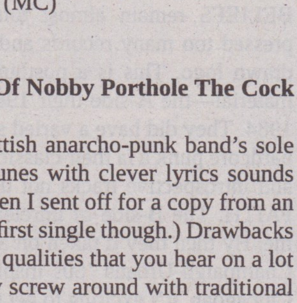
TOY GUITAR – "Move Like A Ghost" CD

One of my favorite local bands. I loved their first full-length









and I'm down with this six-song release. These guys play twisted catchy rock'n'roll but have a strong a pop element. They remind a lot of the STROKES, who I'm not really a fan of. Sort of a much better version of them, I guess. The melodies also take on a JEFF BUCKLEY feel at times. Featuring Jack of many local bands including ONE MAN ARMY and SWINGIN' UTTERS, this is a pretty great pop release. (RL)
(Fat)

THE TUBULOIDS – "Getting Weird" LP

Canadian skate punk on Beer City so no surprise it sounds a little like DAYGLOW ABORTIONS and the FACTION. There's also a surf guitar element that gives it a DEAD KENNEDYS edge. If this were any longer, I would've ripped it a new one as their songwriting and lyrical skills be illin' in the bad sense, but as is it's probably a great soundtrack for your next shitty Canadian kegger half pipe party. Too bad they won't let you cross the border. (RO)
(Beer City)

TUKATUKAS – "Red Blood" CD

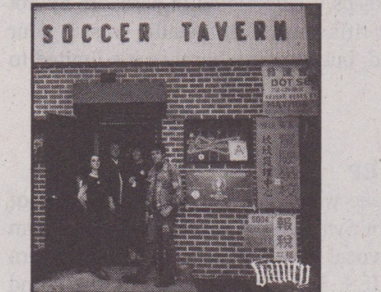
Hardcore punk from La Réunion, France. This extremely tight band presents many pop punk and ska elements with reverberating guitars, horns, piano, and what seems like a real army of band members. *Red Blood* is a romantic and optimistic album, in French, about political plights and solidarity. I imagine these guys have a dedicated following in their neck of the woods, everyone from the demonstrative street anarchist to the passive new bohemian. (JR)
(self-released)

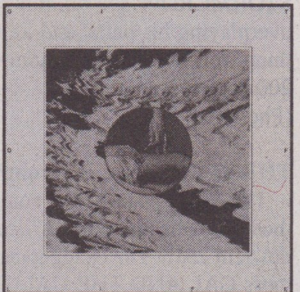
VANITY – "Don't Be Shy" LP

Vanity split a lot of heads with their harder debut, but *Don't Be Shy* seems to be getting punks from many different walks in a tizzy from the jump—ten catchy tunes that tip-toe toward Britpop or even some classic glam / UK power pop middle ground, but never veer too far off of a punk course. It all sounds comparable to something like ROYAL HEADACHE in that the tunes are obviously there, but I'm left wavering and wanting either more filth or more gloss to avoid the dreaded blurring of sameness. The acoustic breathers in the middle of each side also seem a bit heavy-handed here. Griping aside, it's an exceedingly fine line that VANITY's decided to walk and their successes outweigh the missteps. No world-beater, but worth a look-see. (MC)
(Katorga Works)

VINNY HOOLIGANZ – "Late Nights" EP

I was ready to immediately write this off. Calling yourself VINNY HOOLIGANZ and you're from Brooklyn. Isn't that too on the money? To my surprise, the first song "Live And Die In NY" is wildly catchy. Vinny's vocals on this song have a DEVO-esque quality and the bass-heavy music sounds right on. The song is an anthemic tribute to the city of New York. It's a really great song. Unfortunately, the other two tracks are mediocre pop punk love songs. Ugh. Worth buying for "Live And Die In NY," though. (CK)
(Not Like You)





VIOLENT CHANGE – "3" LP

Having seen a few incredible VIOLENT CHANGE shows recently I was really looking forward to this LP. Matt's current live group really should not be missed, transforming basements and shoddy venues into new realities with casual ease. This record delivers Matt's musical vision in a multi-faceted manner, a dense delivery of casual pop genius, with shades of NIKKI SUDDEN. The woozy guitar both unnerves and comforts, there will be a song that sounds like a BIG STAR cover played backwards in someone's rec room ("Television"), shards of guitar coming in from another dimension. The songs seem like perfect pop universes in a world where the NERVES hit the Billboard charts, and everything sounds like it's coming from the room next door, a ghostly specter of a record. (LG)
(It Takes Two / Melters)

VIOLENT HUMAN SYSTEM – "Gift of Life" LP

The first thing that springs to mind when listening to VHS's *Gift of Life* is RIKK AGNEW's *All by Myself*. This may seem like lofty praise, but the two records share the same sense of being halfway between two styles. Rikk fused the SoCal surf-rat punk of the ADOLESCENTS with the synths and dour lyrics more closely associated with CHRISTIAN DEATH, whereas VIOLENT HUMAN SYSTEM take the snotty vocals of early LA punk, as well as the basic songwriting, and marry it with the flanged effects and atmospherics of the gothy post-punk that swept the international punk scene a few years ago. Overall, the songs here are tight and not drowning in affectation, so any fashion choices can be forgiven. Unfortunately, the band loses steam as they approach the end of the record and include some longer, more dirge-y numbers. Still, there are some burners for you goths who also break into LA summer homes to skate empty pools. (LP)
(Suicide Squeeze)

VOMITFACE – "Hooray For Me" LP

OK, let's pretend for a second, you're the kind of person that doesn't like any kind of music made after the '90s. Actually, you only listen '90s music. Rock music achieved its peak with grunge. Everything after that has been pure trash. Well, VOMITFACE is a new band that might just be able to break through your impossible-to-please sky-high standards. They are a grunge band from the East Coast who sound like a fever dream that combines NIRVANA's *In Utero* and PAVEMENT's *Slanted and Enchanted* into one sludgy rock LP. From the very first track it is abundantly clear *In Utero* is the template for this record. Which is why it was a zero percent surprise to read the liner notes, and find out they actually hired Steve Albini to record and mix this album. If you are a self-described "junkie for grunge," this is certainly an album you need to sit down with. (FS)
(Help Yourself)

WAARFACE – "Accepted as Truth" EP

Fuck, this is a hard record to pigeonhole, but it's really fucking fun. Somewhere between TRAGEDY-style epicrust and BOLT THROWER metallic crunch, with moments of trem-picked black metal thrown in for good measure. The guttural vocals remind me a lot of Brian from

STORMCROW, the drummer keeps things rooted in hardcore by not overplaying his parts, and killer riffs abound. If metallic crust is your thing, this a definite recommend, but be quick because it's limited to 200 copies! (AU)
(Phobia)

THE WAD – "Ron is Wrong" EP
The WAD sounds like someone went back in time, swiped one of those 1981 bands from a *Killed by Synth* compilation and plopped them down in 2016. The exaggerated vocal drawl reminds me of midwestern turds CAL AND THE CALORIES. Some of the lyrics are mean and incisive while others are dumb as a box of rocks, but with only three songs, it really works for me. I'm viewing it as the bratty siblings of the SCREAMERS and COUNT VERTIGO. It's lo-fi, stupid, and urgent… everything punk should be. (GH)
(Lumpy)

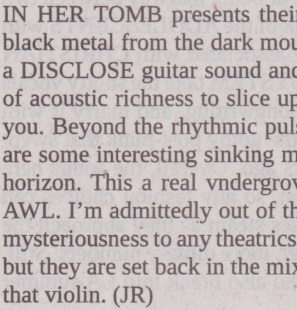
WARTHOG – "Culture?" EP
At this point WARTHOG should really hire someone to scream out "*You wanted the best, you got the best!*" KISS-style before every set because it's true. In 2016, I can't think of another band that consistently writes some of the hardest, bounciest punk jams. This record lies somewhere between D-beat, CRUCIFIX, the more knuckle-dragging aspects of DIE KREUZEN, and that weird existential realization that in 200 years no one will ever remember your name, let alone who you were. I got two of the best records of the year in one month. I must've done something right. (MW)
(Beach Impediment)

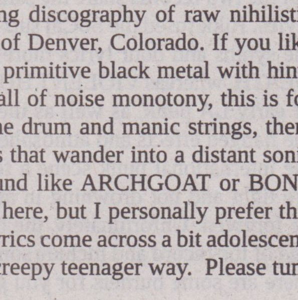
WITCH IN HER TOMB – "Meditations" LP
Cryptically titled as roman numerals "I" through "X", WITCH IN HER TOMB presents their chilling discography of raw nihilistic black metal from the dark mountains of Denver, Colorado. If you like a DISCLOSE guitar sound and super primitive black metal with hints of acoustic richness to slice up the wall of noise monotony, this is for you. Beyond the rhythmic pulse of the drum and manic strings, there are some interesting sinking moments that wander into a distant sonic horizon. This a real vndergrovnd sound like ARCHGOAT or BONE AWL. I'm admittedly out of the loop here, but I personally prefer this mysteriousness to any theatrics. The lyrics come across a bit adolescent, but they are set back in the mix, in a creepy teenager way. Please tune that violin. (JR)
(Crippled Sound)

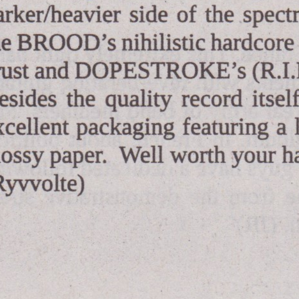
YEAR OF THE FIST – "Dirty Laundry" EP
Oakland band YEAR OF THE FIST has a tough metallic glint. It's definitely punk'n'roll, but it's completely driven by vocals. They really define their whole sound and without them the melodies are a bit insipid. Think the DISTILLERS crossed with a watered down MISFITS. (CR)
(self-released)

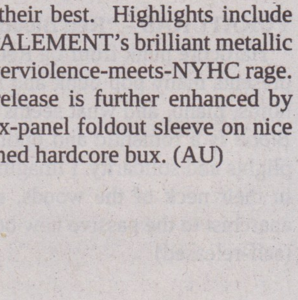
V/A – "Brazil B-Side II" CD
I'm not very interested in most compilations in this day and age. They served their purpose when there was no internet and a plethora of good bands from every city and region imaginable. Now most of the time they just seems unnecessary to me unless they are straight-up urgent and from one certain moment of a geographical location, capturing a small scene in a moment as a time capsule. I still prefer a comp tape made by friends to most everything else containing multiple bands from different scenes. I know that I might be the only person out there who feels this way so here we go. This compilation is very diverse and if you haven't heard a lot of Brazilian bands this could actually be a good place to start. If you dig CD format, then you might like bands such as KATÁSTROFE SOCIAL, FUNERAL, or ARMEGDOM. Shit, maybe you have heard of them before even? The bands that caught my ear are as follows EXCOMUNGADOS, PEKINES GARCIA & MANICOMIO 63, OS GARDENAL, CONDENADOS (my personal favorite here), FILHOS DE INACIO, KOB 82 (another cool band I hadn't heard), and PE SUJUS. There's a little something for everyone from hardcore, noise punk, '77 punk, crust, and straight up chaos. The artwork on here is sorta crazy zombie animation style that is cool and weird. Very colorful. It's a good compilation so far as there are good bands and a good sampling of what is out there in Brazil as far a DIY punk goes. I'm sure however that someone more familiar with that scene probably would say this only represents a small piece of the sound of this enormous country. It kinda makes me want to just travel there and take it all in for myself. Some of these bands are great, so I say track it down. (WK)
(Producoes Pikareta)

V/A – "No Sun Shines Here" EP
Philadelphia is experiencing a bit of a punk renaissance at the moment, and while it doesn't reflect the totality of their thriving scene, this blazing little platter captures six of Philly's finest bands on the darker/heavier side of the spectrum at their best. Highlights include the BROOD's nihilistic hardcore attack, ALEMENT's brilliant metallic crust and DOPESTROKE's (R.I.P.) powerviolence-meets-NYHC rage. Besides the quality record itself, this release is further enhanced by excellent packaging featuring a large six-panel foldout sleeve on nice glossy paper. Well worth your hard-earned hardcore bux. (AU)
(Ryvvolte)









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DEMOS

All cassettes and CD-Rs are reviewed in this section. Send yours to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA and include your contact information. Submissions without artwork will not be considered.

(AT) Alex Turner
(GH) Greg Harvester
(HB) Heather Blotto
(JR) Jason Ryan
(MB) Matt Badenhop
(MT) Michael de Toffoli
(SN) Sean Nieves-Quinones
(WN) Robert Collins

AFTERLIFE – Russia is killing it right now. The social and political climate in that country seem bizarre to this outsider, but if the result is crushing acts like St. Petersburg's AFTERLIFE then it might be time to book a flight. Gut-wrenching metalcore the likes of which haven't hit these shores since the early '90s, delivered at an almost painful snail's pace. A five-track, multi-gendered monolith. All I want from this is more. (WN) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, upxrise@gmail.com, afterlifemxc.bandcamp.com)

ARROTZAK – Brooding while still pretty Basque punk. Think WARSONG. Non-stop infectious beat, jangly guitars, and sing-songy (even some harmonies) vocals in Spanish and Euskara (English translations included). No fronts, just honest punk. This maybe ain't for the cool kids, but definitely worth it for us music lovers among the punks. (MA) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, Akerregi 19, 20808 Getaria, SPAIN, mentefragmentada@gmail.com)

BAD MECHANICS – *Demo 2015* – Make no mistake, this is some goofy, wacky ass shit. The label write-up nails it on the head, citing THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS and NOMEANSNO as sonic touchstones, and I can't argue at all. Its painfully '90s Chicago sounding (in fact members used to play in HEWHOCORRUPTS and GALACTIC CANNIBAL), with big fuzzy bass, buzzsaw guitar that goes metal at times, and big *big* rock drums (though programmed here) with sung / spoken vocals (reminds me of COLOSSAMITE in that respect). But whereas those bands were frequently stonefaced and serious, these guys wander off into very silly surfy or disco passages about snacking, cardio, and wine tasting. Though I certainly wouldn't listen to this again, I do love it for the fact that it is clearly two friends having a blast playing weird surf prog metal and writing about fun and funny things. Overwrought and dark has its place, but so does this. (SN) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, badmechanics.bandcamp.com, hewhocorruptsinc.com, andy@hewhocorruptsinc.com, 1-847-361-7874)

BLUE VELVET – Just over a half hour, this is the first recording from SF rockers BLUE VELVET, who present a gritty, swaggering set live from Bottom of the Hill. Vocal parts are rustic, like CONCRETE BLONDE or DEAD MOON. Guitars are a bolt of MC5 or STOOGES with some post-punk moments, while the bass has a gravelly, metallic MOTÖRHEAD groove. Spastic drumming breaks off from the standard bar scene tempo into its own chaotic fit. Not sure who is doing vocals where, but the band sounds ghostly, and I like how one mic doesn't overpower the next. On recording this is a labyrinth to listen to. I'd like to check out BLUE VELVET live and focus on each part at a time. (JR) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, facebook.com/bluevelvetsf)

BÖMBÄRDEO / D.H.K. – *split* – Heavy and dense D-beat with grizzly vocals from Chile's BÖMBÄRDEO. I really like the repetitive, death-mouth effects, naturally created without the use of looping or echoes. Some sharp guitar-wankery creates a coarse vulgar piercing effect above the rumbling bombardment of bass and drums. A dark HIATUS sound. D.H.K start out their side with a track called "Policia Bastardo"—yes, you got that right, and so do they. Brutal yet mesmerizing songs from Peru, with vibes of DISRUPT, DOOM, LOS CRUDOS, and DISCHARGE! Everything in the liner notes gets umlauted to death! A raw hardcore and ferocious tape EP that is definitely worth getting! (JR) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, bombardeo.dbeat@gmail.com, repugnante_d@hotmail.com)

CASUAL BURN – *Talk Bad* – The sleaze punk sound of New Orleans, somewhere between jittery '80s hardcore (the kind made by pimply mutants rather than tuff shorts wearers), '70s proto-punk (also by mutants), and '60s psych (sans mustaches) all mixed up in an industrial mop bucket with leftover beers you didn't clean up from the show two nights before, some red Crystal Lite and a liter of tequila, left to steep for eight hours in the southern sun. It's unhinged, it's freaky. (SN) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, casualburn.bandcamp.com, 3122 Toledano Street, New Orleans, LA 70125)

CHARLIE CONTINENTAL – *Time* – Double A side single, and both have a coming-of-age protagonist theme song feel to them. That's because, in fact, the first track "Quit Wastin' My Time" is actually the theme song for a coming-of-age sitcom. They're both 60-second bubblegum pop punk songs that have a bright, fun throw-your-backpack-off-when-you-get-home-from-school vibe. Made by the lead vocalist/guitarist for the band SPELLS pursuing his first solo thing, so grab the cassette or just watch it on the TV. (MD) (2-song cassette, no lyrics, charliecontinental.bandcamp.com)

THEE DIRTY RATS – *Perfect Tragedy* – THEE DIRTY RATS are an electro band that has no electronics in what they are doing. They are a guitar and drum two-piece from São Paulo with electro industrial drums and fuzzed-out electric cigar box guitar that is so distorted that it sounds synthesized. You'd think that they're a punk band by the look of them, but they produce a very consistent droning dance beat with very space-y, uncomfortable robot vocals. Good for you DIRTY RATS for tricking me into thinking that you were a garage band and turning out to be robots from my nightmares. (MD) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, theedirtyrats.bandcamp.com)

DISCO 3000 – At times, it's hard to tell what is going on here. It's as if the tape hiss is another instrument all to itself. Some deep ass synth and a wild saxophone lay the groundwork for a manic vocalist to go the fuck off on top of pounding drums. It simultaneously sounds like 1980 and a future that we'll never see or imagine. Truly a product of fucked minds. (GH) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, 970-82-DISCO)

DOUBLE SKELETON – Noisy introverted and introspective punk with a 'gaze gloss and college rock elements, reminiscent of the thoughtfulness of DINOSAUR JR and the aggression of something like PEGBOY, with a ballad-y approach to noise punk abrasiveness. They are very confident in their message while still having a calm approach and powerful execution. Quite a few post-punk tendencies but all with the emphasis on great noisy songwriting. They command respect and I'm so glad that a band like this is putting themselves out there. (MD) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, doubleskeleton.bandcamp.com)

DOXX – Fast and slimy punk along the lines of CIRIL, with shrill female leads and a constant driving pace. The PENI cover at the close is an even better glimpse into the world these Canadians are living in. Good stuff. (WN) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, I-64 James Street, Ottawa, ON K2P 0T6 CANADA, doxxottawa.bandcamp.com)

THE FRESHIES – This tape is billed as the FRESHIES (a '70s Manchester power-pop band), but it is not them. Instead of a fanzine, this is like a fan-tape. There's a four page zine chronicling the history of the band, a risograph poster and a cassette featuring two songs ("My Tape's Gone" and "Moonmid Summer" from a 1980 single) covered by the zine author and friends. The songs are very true-to-form. I guess you should get this if you like the FRESHIES. It's a cool thing. (GH) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, 100yrsagotoday.com)

HEAVY HANDS – A goddamned family emergency kept me from watching these PDX creamers in the flesh last weekend, so listening to these tracks is bittersweet….but it's still great. Low down, creepy crawl side to side mosh with female vox that pierce through the knucklehead riffs like an icepick, and then they turn the burners on and *fukkn fly*. All killer, no filler, over before you know it. I want more. (WN) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, snukytate@gmail.com, heavy-hands.bandcamp.com)

HOOPER / SPELLS – *split* – Two Denver bands that complement each other well, both with well-intentioned and well delivered college rock post-punk on the sensitive side. They have moments where they're really going for it with a fun upbeat time-of-your-life coming-of-age aesthetic, and then they drop into a very serious note that demands attention, like a very respected peer giving you that one piece of advice that stays with you and turns your life around. This is music that will give you the same swelling feeling as the first time that you heard the REPLACEMENTS. HOOPERS song "My Friend the Beast" is an anthem that defines those years. (MD) (4-song cassette, no lyrics, spellsrules.bandcamp.com)

HUSH – It gets kind of chugga-chugga in here. This is hardcore punk in which the singer does not growl or snarl, but instead has that mid pitched, youth crew sort of "yelling through a tube" type of vocals. I like the way he laughs. It has those fast parts and slow breakdowns as well. (ML) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, ooeygooeytapes.bandcamp.com)

PATRICK JENNINGS – *Careful Now* – The creator behind HOT NEW MEXICANS brings together a long list of collaborators and comes through with a more acoustic and stripped down recording. The vocals and arrangements are unmistakable. Patrick's songs have something that is hard to describe. Is it cadence? I feel there might be a swing to them? You know it when you hear it. It is kind of sad sounding, but with hooks in all the right places. (ML) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, letspretendrecords.com)

KAREN– Melodic noise doom from New Haven with over-fuzzed guitars and bright, devastating David Yow bass. Their doomy impacts cut through effortlessly and the whole thing has this avant-garde jazz moment to it. Reminds me a lot of MEN OF PORN and SLEEP. It's fun to groove out on with happy fun hooks that then break down into devestating doom stomps. So groove out to it, bum out to it, get into it. (MD) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, karenthebandfromct.bandcamp.com)

THE KOMINAS – *Stereotype* – East Coast punks playing West Coast pop punk, rich with that East Coast love of reggae. Good fun pop bounciness with reggae off-beats that will then effortlessly catch up into major key. Warm and comforting pop hardcore. It's really accessible and gets into your veins and your hips like mid-era RANCID. Garage party punks looking to dance will love this. (MD) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, kominas.bandcamp.com)

LAUGHING STOCK – *Inside Joke* – These guys are skate punk as shit. Ripping solos throughout every song. Wild. It sounds like it came out of Orange County in 1985. Like ILL REPUTE but with the melody of Boston hardcore from the early '00s. (SN) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, laughingstockboston.bandcamp.com, laughingstockboston@gmai.com, 520 Cambridge Street, Apt 5, Boston, MA 02134)

LUMBERJERKS – *Four More* – Snarling snotty pop punk with vocals that sounds like he's sneering through his teeth. It all sounds very rude but they also have a crystal clean recording that's tight and easy to listen to. Clear dry guitars that don't need to barrel through the songs and crystal drums that sit on top to tap into pop punk's reggae side. Reminds me of so many East Bay pop punk bands but has a *fuck you* Midwest attitude. Fun vibes, harsh weather. They got some pretty good tunes. (MD) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, lumberjerks.bandcamp.com)

MACHO BOYS – *Toughest Band in Hardcore* – MACHO BOYS are not super macho and (thankfully) not all boys, but might be one of the toughest bands in (Portland) hardcore. Mixing elements of US hardcore and KBD-style punk, MACHO BOYS rip out six blasts of crucial-ness that you need in your life. This is an excellent demo and I'm looking forward to what comes next. (GH) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included machoboys.bandcamp.com)

NAG – This one starts out really heavy and I wondered if I was heading into metal territory. Nope, just some weird ass noise rock with heavy production. This Atlanta band manages to deliver an obnoxious racket while still maintaining an appealing sound with interesting songs. Monotone, lumbering, and "in the red" are all appropriate descriptors. Mind you, this is not boring at all. The second track is my repeat jammer. (MA) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, scavengerofdeathrecords.bandcamp.com)

NARB – This is pretty rudimentary sounding punk with some serious delay on the vocals. So much so that the words cross over each other in displeasing confusion. The lyrics are definitely negative. I liked it. (ML) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, 2008 Rice Avenue, McAllen, TX 78504)

NIVEAS – *Vol 1* – Doo-wop surf band from Buenos Aires with all the "ooo-wah-ooos" that you want in this kind of music. Obvious surf beats with so many traditional classic surf melodies all recorded very lo-fi, and the whole thing is so reverbed that it sounds like you're listening through the wall to the party next door. Great to play on the car ride to the bonfire at the beach amongst the other surf pop in your collection. (MD) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, facebook.com/losniveas)

PENALTY KICK – *Ventrilogasm* – Indie rock from Portland playing mid '00s style mathy jazz-band-nerd indie rock. The songwriting style is reminiscent of bands like the NEW TRUST, with bleeding heart vocals and melodies that you can tell were thought and rethought and then rethought again, growing into something that is both complex and fully-formed. Very creative, very much pushing themselves musically, and more importantly, emotionally. These are musicians that sound like they aren't flaunting talent, but more holding themselves to a high standard. They're definitely worth your time. (MD) (13-song cassette, no lyrics, penaltykick.bandcamp.com)

PHANTOM FAMILY – Driving dark punk that at times reminds me of the the BIRTHDAY PARTY or a less sassy *Gems Of Masochism*-era ANTIOCH ARROW. Synth is mixed in, subtly adding an extra creepy evil factor. The vibe is less freaky than aforementioned bands, and is decidedly more east coast serious guy post-hardcore. (SN) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, 5025 SW Corbett Avenue #17, Portland, OR 97239)

PLASTIC HEAP – Maybe this is just my coffee-addled brain talking, but is it possible to take JESUS LIZARD and 7 YEAR BITCH influences and update them in 2016 queercore punk without sounding shitty? The answer is yes because that is what Columbus, Ohio's PLASTIC HEAP is doing in my head. Fierce and direct vocals scream about refusing assimilation, feeling like a shitty freak in this straight ass world and trying to stay alive. The whole band puts out a heavy vibe but they're still catchy. It's the kind of shit that gives you hope. This is the second tape by this band. Get them both. (GH) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, plasticheap.bandcamp.com, 1579 Indianola Ave, Columbus, OH 43201)

THE RATCATCHER – Blistering (but defunct) hardcore from Russia. A cold sound reminiscent of '80s Czech / Polish stuff, but the RATCATCHER tend to eschew hooks for intensity and the result is extremely sick. But when they do slow down enough for the melodies to come out…? Then they might be even better. This came out in 2014, but the internet says there are copies available. Highly recommended. (WN) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, upxrise@gmail.com, theratcatcher.bandcamp.com)

RITUAL ORDER – Deathrock for the hardcore kids. Rozz Williams moshing with a chain. The lyrics are printed on burned parchment, which is pretty sick. (SN) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, ritualorder.bandcamp.com, sarcophagusclub.bigcartel.com, 805 W. Highland, Denton, TX 76201)

S-21 – Philly fuckers who play totally fucked style of sludgy ass hardcore that is ugly as shit and swimming in goddamn feedback. 1-2-1-2 drums. The bass sounds like it's being dragged through a swamp. The singer sounds like she'll kill you. You are buying this and partying. (GH) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, S-21.bandcamp.com)

SUNSHINE WARD – *There Will Be Quiet After the Gig* – This is a tape recorded live by these Boston fuckers for tour and it rips! Everything was recorded live with no loss of momentum or motherfucking rage. They play whatever sub-genre of hardcore all those people in Boston play. You know, the people with 1000 count studded jackets (I'm sure they shark-tooth stud it) and lurk around with Crusty Tim at Veggie Galaxy when he's in town. They cover POISON IDEA, BLITZ, KILLING JOKE and more. Just get it, idiot. (GH) (?-song cassette, lyrics not included, sunshineward.bandcamp.com)

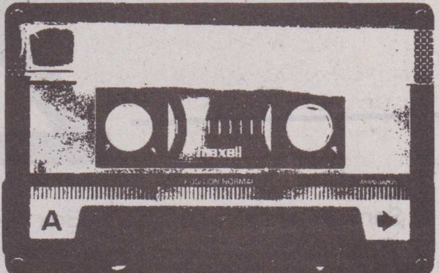
SWEATS – Clocking in at just over eight minutes, the first tape from this Portland outfit burns from start to finish and never lets up. Throaty, ferocious USHC. Zero bullshit. And the mosh part in the eponymous track? Ugh, dear reader: you need to do the right thing here and get sweaty. (WN) (5- song cassette, lyrics included, snukytate@gmail.com, sweatyman.bandcamp.com)

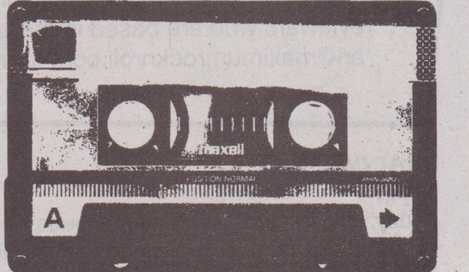
TOXIC WOMB – Leave it to monotonous wage drudgery to keep inspiring sick ass punk songs all over the world for eternity. "Slob on My Job" doesn't even clock in at a minute, but the two vocalists use that time to spit out rage and bile while the guitars just get free over a pretty basic riff. TOXIC WOMB is fucking pissed and play short, furious blasts of sloppy basement hardcore and sing about shit jobs, shitty people and the shitty things they do to bring you down. (GH) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, 1579 Indianola Avenue, Columbus, OH 43201, toxicwombpunk.bandcamp.com)

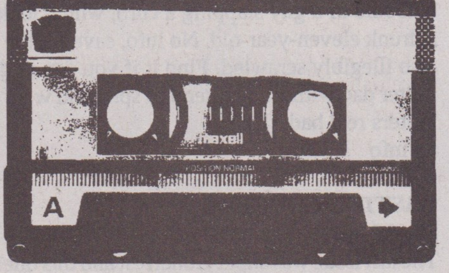
UNFRITH – This is kind of dark and angular, and reminds me of FUGAZI-era DC hardcore. It's five songs with vocals and an instrumental in the middle. Lyric sheet has song explanations in that same '90s vein. Lyrics are well thought-out and contain a conscience. (ML) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, ninehertz.co.uk.com)

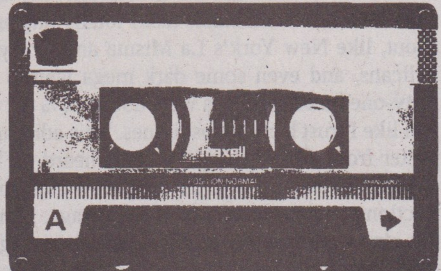
UNRULY BOYS – These dudes have a Fred Perry logo on their front cover, so you'd hope they'd include a lyric sheet and you'd assume they be skins, but you'd come up short on both counts. Nope. Throwdown style hardcore. Knuckle dragging shit with heavy nods to NYHC like WARZONE and youth crew stuff like YOUTH OF TODAY. Tight, fast, and by the books. No bullshit. (GH) (4-song cassette, no lyrics, vileaudiolabel@gmail.com)

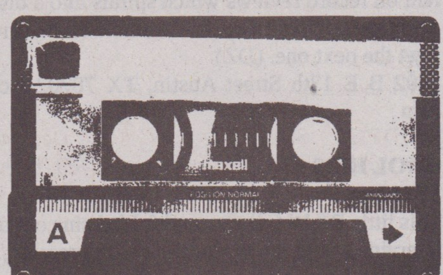
WILD AT HEART – I don't know what I was expecting with this Philly band, but I didn't get what it and that's really cool. The guitars drift into a world that floats somewhere between the CRAMPS, DEAD MOON, and a spaghetti western. The bass tone is just huge and the drums are pounding. The vocals are howling and desperate, but totally commanding. They use a lap steel at one point, but it's still punk as fuck. Top tier shit. (GH) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, sensualworldrecords@gmail.com)

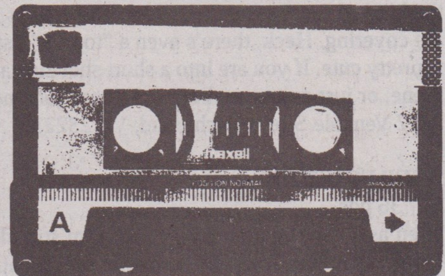












ZINES

Send zines for review to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA. Include postpaid price within the US and internationally. We are always looking for multi-lingual zine reviewers who are based in the US. Write to ari@maximumrocknroll.com for more information.

(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(BW) Brendan Wells
(DG) Dan Goetz
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EC) E. Conner
(EW) Eli Wald
(JB) Julia Booz
(KS) Kenn Suto
(MM) Marissa Magic
(MR) Mikey Minicomix
(RB) Rory Britt
(SW) Shivaun Watchorn

BRAINWASH #4

18 pgs

A tiny, doodle heavy, zine that appears to be written by an aging skate dad and features an interview with skater Alejandro DePass, an interview with a member of a fictitious, all-dad, secretive, late night skate gang, doodles of John Waters, and a pull-out "poster." There's also a doodle of a guy slapping a curb, which looks like it was scribbled by a drunk eleven-year-old. No info, save for the person's hotmail address, also illegibly scrawled. Find it if you can...I guess. I mean, if you are a skater dad with a tiny attention span and want to see that doodle of John Waters real bad. (DZ)

no info

CASTING COUCH #4

$7 / 36 pgs

The last issue was super Gonerfest and this one is still pretty rock-centric. To be honest, while that isn't necessarily my thing, it ain't so bad. There were interview with bands that I totally dug and am now pretty excited about, like New York's La Misma and Crazy Spirit, Florida's Golden Pelicans, and even some dark mega weirdo Richard Papiercuts. The forty-one record reviews were about 98% out of my general field, but I feel like I trust her on most issues. This edition promised a cute pull-out poster from a band that I've never heard of, but I didn't get it. Either another reviewer has it on their wall over their headboard now, or a fraction of a penny was saved on postage. I imagine if I lived in Austin, this zine would be downright essential. Living here, though, it's merely pretty awesome, and that ain't so bad. There's a really great opening rant on record reviews which spirals into a discussion about her role as a woman in a weird, male-dominated field. I really like this rag. I hope I get the next one. (DZ)

2402 B E 13th Street Austin, TX 78702 / castingcouchzine@gmail.com

COOL HISS #3

$2 / 10 pgs

This little B&W full-size and folded zine out of Richmond, VA features interviews with Jason Hodges of Suppression, the band Nosebleed, and Richmond scene alum "Good Show" Steve, plus a page of pretty hard to make out copies of photographs. It's a straight up, cut'n'paste affair, the kind of fanzine made by someone who is very into the music they are covering. Heck, there's even a "top 15" list in the beginning, which is pretty cute. If you are into a short shot zine about the Richmond punk scene, or just enjoy smaller punk scene fanzines, check this out. (KS)

2227 Venable Street, Richmond, VA 23223

DEEP FRIED #10

$1 / 36 pgs

Even as a nerdy gluten-free vegan, I'm still all about punk food zines. These wingnuts from Minneapolis are all about fast food, which is totally depressing, but I'll try to not be a fucking food snob and just do my job. A pretty funny mess, filled with ancient TMNT, Crystal Clear Pepsi, Del Taco, hotdog and toilet paper ads, interviews with Burger Records co-founders and Gooch Palms, comics, and a pretty cool chart on how to end your night depending on who you see at the show. It's a pretty good read, three outta five on my just made up chuckle-meter. Fast food, though, really? Fuckin' hell. (DZ)

2901 Yosemite Avenue, South St. Louis Park, MN 55416 / deepfriedzinempls.com

FOOTSWEAT #1

$3 / 38 pgs

Slices of punk life perzine that tells various stories from the Canadian author's past (references to dial-up and Katrina as it is happening get made), a lot of which have to do with traveling. The writing is even-keeled and detail-heavy, occasionally getting too bogged down (but not often) and the cut'n'pasted square blocks of text make for a nice aesthetic. I miss coming across zines (and punks) like this on a regular basis. (DG)

PO Box 273, Mocton, New Brunswick E1C 8K9, CANADA

I STOPPED DRINKING AND I HATE YOU ALL

£1 / 36 pgs

This pocket-sized zine takes the form of an open letter to the city of London from a recently sober activist punk. The author treats their love affair and eventual break-up with alcohol almost like a partner in their life. We get the introduction story—how they started out with two cans of beer a day, how they fell in love, how it helped them through each day with anxiety, and depression. Then of course, the downfall, followed by the break-up and eventual aftermath. It contains all the requisite parts a perzine should have in order to truly move me: stark honesty, gritty confessions, and a little bit of hope in the end. As a person who for the most part is quite disturbed by bar and binge-drinking culture, there were so many parts that I found extremely snarky in the best possible way. The author writes about a beach party where someone asks if they are overwhelmed because they were no longer drinking. They reply by acknowledging how beautiful the atmosphere is and how if they were drinking they simply could not even appreciate being in that moment. As someone who has spent a lot of their life sober, and finding peace within nature, I really enjoyed this part of the zine a lot. I have only recently discovered part of my own process of dealing with anxiety and depression is to truly be in the moment and to appreciate that time as it comes. This is a great zine whether or not you are in a recovery process, and in my opinion, it is an incredible purchase for someone who has a friend or family member in the recovery process as it can truly help you understand what they may be going through on the day to day. (RB)

freedompress.org.uk

IT'S DOWN TO THIS #2

$3.50 / 40 pgs

How many zines about the intersection between sexual / gendered violence and community are there? It's an actually formidable genre and yet even typing that seems so disingenuous. The zines always seem to be written with urgency and emotion, even though they are edited and formatted. This is the second issue of this magazine and seems to be somewhat themed around looking backwards and learning. Its tone throughout is careful and considerate. The articles written by various contributors tackle subjects ranging from an accountability process from the perpetrator's perspective, long-term healing strategies, and how the intersections of oppression and privilege complicate and inform everything. There are illustrations and prints with lots to say on their own. (EC)

clairenceurb@gmail.com

KAMIKAZA

$4 / 30 pgs

This is a fanzine about Satan Panonski and then about Yugoslavian punk in general. Satan Panonski is described as "Yugoslavia's GG Allin" and this zine follows him from his discovery of punk to being in bands and dreaming of punk utopia to being sent to mental institutions to becoming a nationalist and participating in acts of genocide. It also has a narrative about the rise and fall of punk in Yugoslavia. An interesting little chunk of history that brings up thoughts of being a punk under different political atmospheres and / or life during wartime. (MM)

agittlitz@gmail.com

KING CAT #76

$5 / 32 pgs

This guy has been at this forever. I've been seeing his stuff around for years and years. A lot of his work is autobiographical and reads like a journal or diary, and there's a lot of attention to nature and animals and birds. The art style is a bit simple for me, but serviceable. I'm always into bombed-out super-detailed artwork and comics, but minimalism does have its place. That's how this guy has been able to produce so many comics for so long without going mad and still keeping up the pace. At least a third of this zine is devoted to his mail correspondence, printing letters he's been sent. Creating a network like that is one of the things that mini-comics, zine-ing and postal art can accomplish. All of the letters are about stuff like nature, comics, kitties, and life events, just like his comics. There's a King Cat top 40 list in back, which is just a recent list of the stuff he likes, from records to food to movies to comics plus a specific cougar sighting and more. I like how into nature he is. His comics have a certain charm to them, even though they're so minimalist. (MR)

PO Box 142, South Beloit, IL 61080 / king-cat.net

MY LEFT FOOT

$2 / 7 pgs

A short zine by my friend Poliana about breaking her left foot (her first broken bone, at age 34) and some of the feelings and obstacles she experienced over the course of the healing process, along with reflections on those people in her life who did and didn't show up while she was recovering. The text is accompanied by photos from the perspective of her foot in various places, including a bus and in front of a Christmas tree. I'd particularly recommend this zine to anyone who can relate to the feelings of isolation that come with illness, injury, or disability, and it offers a good perspective for those who haven't. (DG)

bibliophiliac.bigcartel.com

NOT FOR EVERYONE #3

$2 / 24 pgs

This thing's a pretty well put-together full-size hardcore fanzine. It's got an interview with M.P.K., pictures of people doing skateboard stuff, reviews of records and live shows and a story that's (kind of) about seeing Vivisick as a young punk, all well-written with a strong voice. There's a little bit of regional stuff about the Portland scene. The M.P.K. interview is insightful and definitely one of the highlights. I'm not sure how much it costs but, like, I'd probably buy it if I saw it at the record spot. Worth a look if you're into what's happening in Portland punk, or skateboarding, but preferably both. (CD)

1130 SE Ash Street, Portland, OR 97214 / snukytate@gmail.com

OH CRACKERS! #3

$3 / 20 pgs

So according to the intro, this is the third issue of this punk comic, finally released after fourteen-year break. He must have some sort of art career outside of comics, because he's just too good not to! I think this guy, Bill, was either born during the wrong time period, or he's wasted his life by not making more comics. His style of illustration is excellent. A little art-school-brushed up, and very reminiscent of old *EC* type stuff or even *Mad Magazine*. The humor is a bit hit or miss to me, though. A lot of the gags are around aging punks. My favorite was the one where punks go spend time with old punks who're too adult or together now, like the punk version of meals on wheels. And he has this other segment, "Poser Patrol," about punks who go check posers at punk shows. Not so much pathos filled or confessional / autobiographical—it's definitely more in-scene humor like Mitch Clem's *Nothing Nice to Say*, but slightly grimier, bagging on older punks like *Portlandia* bags on hipsters. I remember when hipsters trumped posers as something to worry about scene-wise (beyond violence and sexual predators). Like, not as big a deal as all that, but they're still suckin' the life outta things. Nowadays, I almost miss hipsters compared to the homogenous tech bros, suits, yuppies, and their hetero-normative honky death culture they've replaced *everything* with. Punks in the cuts take note: gentrification's comin' to a place near you to commit culturecide soon! (MR)

wbhauser@yahoo.com / www.etsy.com/shop/billhauserart

THE OREGON PRISON FORUM # 2

free / 16 pgs

If you are like me dear reader—and I know you're just like me—you feel in your bones that people in prison are among some of the most silenced and marginalized people in our nation. Sure, *Orange is the New Black* is a real popular binge-watch among the buddies but there is still a real strong prejudice against people who have been incarcerated. That's something we should all ponder more because the United States has the largest prison population in the world and because most of those prisoners are nonviolent offenders (who are predominantly poor people of color). Prisons and consequences of incarceration are things we all need to think hard about, but what we need even more is to hear from people who are in prison. *The Oregon Prisoner Forum* is a great addition to the stacks of fascinating and moving material written by incarcerated folks and I definitely recommend this to anyone who cares about what prison is and does. Here we have poetry, critical pieces on prison labor, tips on how to do legal research, and a great long piece on prison slavery is (and thus the history of slavery). The piece by Tizz Bee on the prison slavery and the history of prisons is especially moving, as it draws how prisons function now (as a cheap labor force for the corporations we all support with our money) into connection with labor as a broader concept and the cages we all live in under capitalism. This zine is about prisoners in the Oregon penal system, but it's also a broad and powerful indictment of the society we live in, a society that turns people into cogs in money-making machines for the few. If you care about prison, read it and appreciate it. If you don't think about prison, read it and start thinking. If you are a radical dreaming of a better world, read this and take heart that even those who live in a box of concrete and steel still dream of something better for us all than this mess. You can find this publication as a PDF online pretty easily, but maybe also consider donating to contact information below. (KS)

109 SE Alder Street, Unit 0717, Portland, OR 97214

PULL THE TRIGGER #2
£2 / 60 pgs

I recently made the complaint I am sick of reading the same interviews over and over again. As a zinester myself, it leaves me feeling uninspired. I love reading challenging interviews because that is often what challenges me to be better. What has always interested me is the human connection behind artists and their creations. When fanzines take the approach of humanizing the artist I find that to be a lot more alluring than finding out when their next 7-inch will be coming out or what the current state of punk is in their respective city. Give me something more. Give me a reason to care about your art. *Pull The Trigger* has executed that perfectly. This is a UK based fanzine put together by James Domestic (vocalist for the Domestics) with the help of several UK based contributors. There is an excellent interview with Jonah Falco of Career Suicide and Fucked Up fame that sucks you right in. The interviews with Cult Syndrome and Girl Power are equally as well thought-out. The only criticism I would give is that I would have liked to maybe see more of interesting layout style. The zine itself is mostly cut'n'paste on a plain black background. The photography is minimal. There aren't many distractions that cause my eyes to glaze over all the content provided, but perhaps that is the point. The zine is also somewhat political with a huge breakdown of how the National Health Service (the UK's health provider) works. There is so much content in this zine that you can keep coming back to it—perfect for your coffee table reads. (RB)
imminentdestruction.bigcartel.com

SODA KILLERS #11
$5 / 32 pgs

This one's a chiller. *Soda Killers #11* is a solid dose of the punk zine craft that includes interviews with Minneapolis graffiti artist ERGOT, Midwest hardcore alum and wrestling fantatic Tony Erba, and Chicago's Boilerman. On top of that there are record reviews, a small piece about hating Radiohead, a weed-infused review of four tapes (I didn't really know what was going on there), and a piece about tape swapping via mail and how that led into one person's life in punk. The interviews are great, as Nathan O'Brien (who does all the interviews but not all the content in the zine) knows his subject matter and asks great questions. You gotta appreciate a zine that can talk about punk and hardcore and review records right next to an interview about graffiti and seem on top of all subject matters. It's a great read, and you should pick it up. I know I'll keep my eyes peeled for the next issue. (KS)
thee.n.o.b@gmail.com / hotdogdayz.bigcartel.com

THIS COULD BE YOU #1
$2 / 20 pgs

I've been mired lately by infighting, betrayal, and wondering who the fuck my community is. This zine feels like floating in a cloud of support and affinity. It consists of brief but pointed interviews with mainly (but not only) QTPOC / femmes about touring. Questions like "What does self-care on tour look like?" "How do you prepare yourself mentally for tour?", and "What is it about touring, playing shows and participating in DIY that makes you continue doing it even when the monetary and resource compensation often does not meet the time and expenditures?" That last one is such a crucial question to ask, because we the punx seem to never want to acknowledge that money is real and we have to use it and its so hard for most of us to come up with it, especially when having "ambition" is shamed. No spoiler, but nobody actually addresses the hardships of money—it's just what I personally got out of the question. The answers are all very varied and intimate, speaking to issues that have come up for me that I've never named. One of the interviews is with Shawna from Bestfriend Girlfriend who said they have check-ins every time they get in the car for a long drive on tour, in order to stay aware of where people are at. This is the best advice, and I can't believe I never thought of it. The same questions are asked of every interviewee so you get into a rhythm of the different way people respond to these ideas and inquiries. I felt supported reading it, enlightened, and I highly recommend it to anyone who tours, who goes to see touring bands, who gives a shit about communicating. Yeah! (JB)
yopalangi@yahoo.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #142
$2 / 44 pgs

For a zine that has been going for #142 issues and almost twenty-five years, the author's continued enthusiasm for punk is still apparent. I don't even really mind that this was probably laid out on Microsoft Word with too-dark photos or that the back cover announcement uses what looks like a Night of the Living Dead font. Starting off this zine are a couple of show reviews that break things down in great detail, followed by a Columbia, MO Girls Rock Showcase photo spread, an informed interview with Royal Brat (ex-Babes in Toyland), a few good record reviews, and a couple of political pieces at the end. Here's to another 142 issues. (DG)
PO Box 1444, Columbia, MO 65205

TRUST #177
€3.00 / 60 pgs

A German zine that has occasional passages in English. There are columns, letters, news stories, pictures, reviews, interviews, and a cover story about ethical consumerism. Long-running, black and white. Looks cool. (MM)
Postfach 11 07 62, 28087 Bremen, GERMANY / trust-zine.de

TRUST #178
€3 / 60 pgs

When I first saw this issue the cover struck me as some kind of weird '90s industrial / goth / lite pin-up magazine—lots of black bold sans serif text with some weird floating orb just kind of slapped on top. The content, however, is a really rad (not that my misconception would have been a disappointment, mind you) contemporary German punk and hardcore magazine much like the one you hold in your hands. The stark hard graphic design follows the same look at the cover but gets a little funkier. The content is largely in German with the exception of some reviews of English-language zines (a nicety we unfortunately couldn't reciprocate). From what I can glean, though, there's a lot of cool stuff packed in here! Columns, great full-page photos, an article about the paradox of ethical consumerism, reviews and more! After doing a little online research I confirmed that *Trust* is indeed a political punk and hardcore magazine that is actively looking for review submissions and content! So great! (EC)
Postfach 11 07 62, 28087 Bremen, GERMANY / trust-zine.de

WILDFIRE: AN ANARCHIST PRISON NEWSLETTER #5
free / 29 pgs

As the prison strike enters its third week, I write this at a more pressing time than any, for prisoners to organize within prisons. *Wildfire* contains communiqués and discourses to free folk and between prisoners on the subjects of liberation and the nuanced and difficult paths to the end goal. Giving voice and context to those who are otherwise a faceless mass to most on the outside. *Highly recommended.*
PO Box 3133, Bloomington, IN 47402 / wildfire.noblogs.org

XEM SKATERS: GENDERQUEER SKATE ZINE #1
€2 / 44 pgs

Are you thinking what I'm thinking? Finally there's a skate zine for genderqueer and gender variant sk8rs! Wowie! This little guy is jam-packed full of interviews, cool collages, and action shots. Featured are a sprinkling of international skaters as well a people who play in bands. My favorite skate zine of 2016, *Not Shit,* is featured and interviewed, as well as the Queer Skating Coalition out of Brooklyn. I also really appreciated that there was also a gender identity glossary included to help make the magazine as accessible as possible. (EC)
xemskaters@gmail.com / xemskaters.tumblr.com

SCENIC

NEW YORK CITY

VIC RUGGIERO & THE SNAILS
(TEAMNG UP FOR A SAM THE SHAM & THE PHARAOHS COVER SET)
THE OTHERMEN
OCTOBER 26 @ DON PEDRO

CHOKING VICTIM
OCTOBER 30 @ WARSAW

THE WORLD / INFERNO FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY
HALLOWMAS - OCTOBER 31 @ WARSAW

MURPHY'S LAW
OCTOBER 31 @ DON PEDRO

AJJ DINERS
CHRIS FARREN
NOVEMBER 6 @ WARSAW

THE SONICS
NOVEMBER 12 @ WARSAW

ALL TORN UP / ASKULTURA
THE LADRONES / A-TRUTH
NOVEMBER 12 @ DON PEDRO

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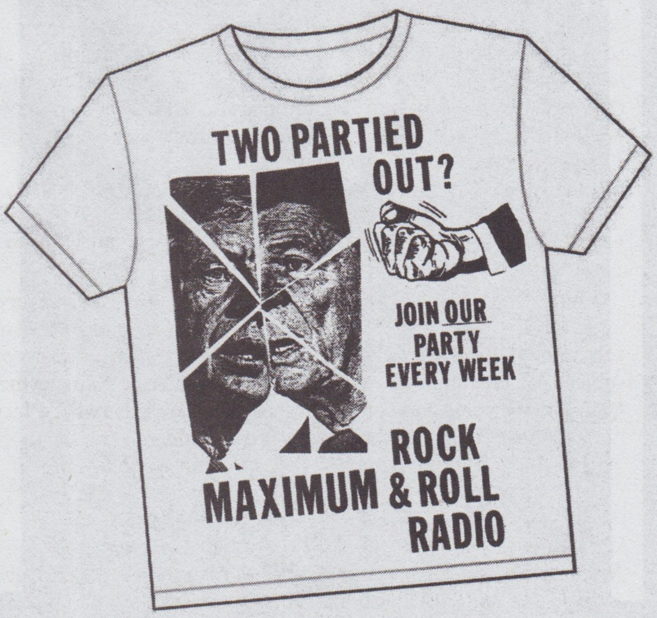

WILL PUNKS EVER GET SICK OF TALKING ABOUT REAGAN?

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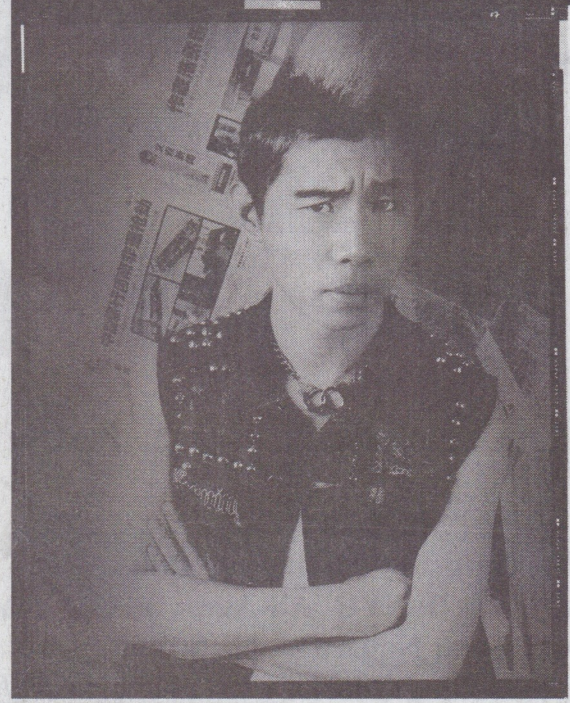
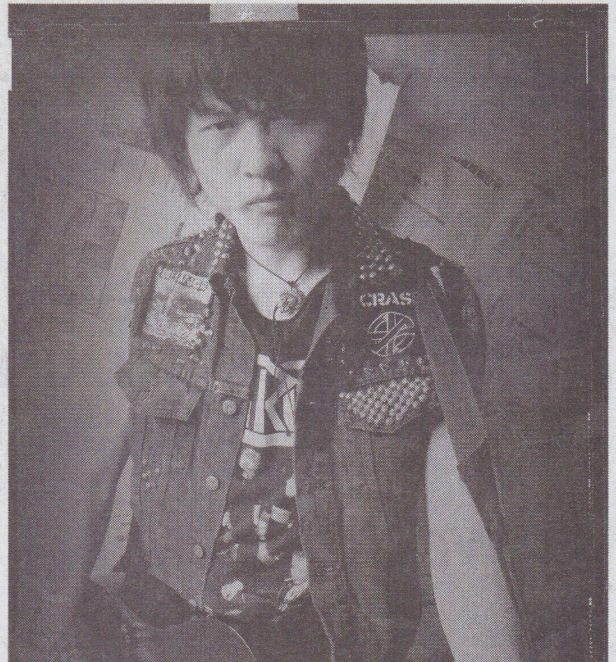
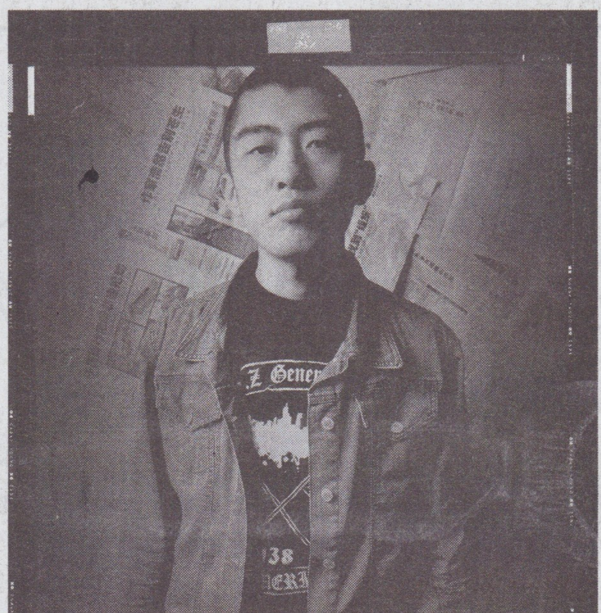
MRR #403 IS THE ALL-CHINA ISSUE







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hood becomes "cool" and rich
and drive the prices up. You
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little town where nobody's got any real problems.
Scoia: We have fucking tanks. We're the Independent Republic of Veneto. *[He's referring to a nutty far right movement that emerged lately that claims that the region of Veneto has a right to become its own state, like Catalunya or the Basque Country. But unlike these cases, Veneto's claim is completely absurd and based on nothing but hate for "strangers." This hasn't stopped some of these crazy fucks from building a fucking tank and putting on a demonstration where they caused a civil war scare by driving on the streets with this fucking homemade tank. I think you can google this shit to find out more.]*

Where I live, if you look slightly different than the norm, nobody

Scoia: That's why I don't care about lyrics in my songs. I'm just used to not communicating and I like it.
Fede: He doesn't care about lyrics in other people's songs either. He just listens to what it sounds like.
Scoia: I can go anywhere. I walk into a club, I don't have to check out what kind of people are there. I'm comfortable with people fucking with me. Verona, for example, has always been considered a racist, xenophobic, right wing town by the media; that's all because of the town's hooligans. I'm fucking sick of this. When you say you're from Verona, people judge you, they say, "Whoa, you're kind of extreme up there." Of course Verona has a shitty side, but it's been blown

bomber people kind of fre
me. It's a fucking jacket, *por*
boia. It's a fucking jacket, *d*
to bust my balls, it means y

MRR: So you have a bad
worse relationship...
Laura: With
humanity!
Fede: We're
Scoia: It's fa
contradictio
Sofia: He ref
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MRR: And
bar, Scoia?
Scoia: On t
the myth of
right wing
If you take
harming th
fighting an
nobody eve
strike is "co
they're talk
the media t

MRR: It's
carries thi
you to be
Laura: Do t
Fede: We
bands in Ve
Scoia: Com
knives.

MRR: So,
next?
Scoia: Yea
record. W
tour in la
with who
get in tou
Germany
really trea
it's like be
to a shitty

MRR: Wh
of *MRR*?
Fede: Do you wanna spl
Laura: Fuck people wh
without having to work
give a fuck.